DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 121 192 HE 007 639

AUTHOR	Chmaj, Betty E.
TITLE	Image, Myth and Beyond. American Women and American Studies. Vol. 2.
PUB DATE	72
NOTE	396p.; Not available in hard copy due to marginal reproducibility
AVAILABLE FROM	Know, Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15221 ($5.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; American Literature; Art; Books; *Females; *Feminism; Films; *Higher Education; History; Humor; *Sex Discrimination; Womens Education; *Womens Studies; Women Teachers; Working Women; World Literature

ABSTRACT

The status of American women and women's studies are described. Part 1 of the report covers the status of women in universities and the professions. Part 2, on courses and programs, deals with course syllabi and commentary, programs of women's studies courses at specific institutions, continuing education programs, and a women's history research center. Images and myths concerning colleges and women are examined in Part 3. Specific issues addressed include: official positions toward women, the women's liberation movement, female instructors, the concept of women in literature, women in American history, film stereotypes, stereotypes in comic books, and images of women in nineteenth and twentieth century art. (LBH)

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18, para 2, end--And extraordinary effort.
20, para 2, 1.8--Rickman, who. . .has told
23, para 3, near end--phenomenon, or the
34, para 1, 1.5 & 6--yet ~~one~~ scrawled... WILSON IS A RIGHT-ON ♀!"
52-53, bottom and top--"shock"...Jo Freeman
76, under Res. #16--Do not write Ms. Rudnick; write the Exec. Sec. of the ASA.
84, para 3, near end--prevented him from
90, para 2, 1.3--by its very absurdity
90, para 3, 1.7--evidence of sexist bias
99, para 3, 1.10--The union's firm, then
102-04--"Editor's Addition, August 20, 1973" belongs at end of chapter or in footnote. It closes the tale--for the present.
119, author's name--Mary KELLY (Sorry, Mary!)
154--Editor's Note, midpage, belongs on p. 153
158, last line--"Isadora" is separate topic
159, line 3--Sanger's Fight
172, line 3--Whether or not such programs
184--Ed. Note under section III belongs on p. 183 (The archives are now in storage.)
188-89, top--Ed. Note belongs on p. 187
191, para 2, end--ago.^{7} (boldface footnote)
199, Part VIII, 1.2--unanimity
211, line 4--"inner-spaced"
234--Note in italics at bottom belongs at top; note after asterisk belongs at bottom
239, near end--women only ("separatism"
240 & 244--Explanation in my introduction is unclear because end of Smith-Rosenberg's statement is missing from p. 244. It reads: "Their experience, moreover, was probably shared, though less overtly, by the thousands of women who devoted time and money to the great number of reform causes which multiplied in Jacksonian America. Women in the abolition and the temperance movements (and to a less extent in more narrowly evangelical and religious causes) also developed a sense of their ability to judge for themselves and of their right to publicly criticize the values of the larger society. The lives and self-image of all these women had changed--if only so little--because of their new reforming interests."
245, 14 lines from bottom--Not "But the" but "There are incidental advantages. . ."
245, 9 1. from bottom--The Left very shallowly sees women associating and living with white males and therefore. . . (etc.)

page, paragraph, line   error or addition

249, title--FULLER VS. FULLER. . . Bucky?"
252, Illustration--Unrelated to previous article; explanation here is missing. A curious new fad reported in MOVING OUT (Vol. 2, No. 2) is the sale of small pillows ("poufs") to women to insert to make them look pregnant.
275 & 289--Ed. Note (footnote #1) on p. 289 belongs on p. 275 as introductory note
284, title & author--Among. . .JUDITH (2,253·)
289, Fn. 3, 1.6--of the 1920's
293, para 1, 1.1--~~Part V~~ (end of line)
299, title & author--SCARLETT. . . Joseph W.; and Joe's authorship of this chapter should be acknowledged by larger type!
300-301--Pages switches by mistake!
311, para 2, end--seem the hallmark
318, midpage--and the "living woman" whose
329 & 343--Only my introduction to this chapter & its footnotes on p. 343 should be called "Learning to See Anew"
330--title, author, illustration caption, all just prior to last para--PRESSURES OF THE IDEAL, by Joy S. Kasson, Department of English, Univ. of North Carolina. "The chain was the secret to the statue's success. . .ideal beauty made poignant by a sense of helplessness."
345, typeset of title and authors (see Table of Contents for correct version), spacing needed between quotes & text
346, top of page--Ed. Note that began p. 345 should not be here but at page bottom
348, 1.6--encounter in the world
349, para 3, 1.4--She is more overpowering
355, 1.9--are /not as/ ancestors
364, para 1, 1. 14 & 16--unfeeling
378, mid-paragraph--her hymen, not her brain
383, punctuation in title--THINKING"--
383-384--Figure 23--Since illustration did not fit on p. 383, line 7 should read: On the next page is an item. . .
390, within quote--~~straighten~~ flushed like
396, para 2, near end--"black ground-shadows"
401, fn. 6, end of sentence missing--the way the novel has been widely validating the American poet.

PRODUCTION STAFF:

Judity Gustafson

Georgia Green

Ann Sprague

Dolores Kenney

Arlene Araki

and

Charlotte Warren, for KNOW

C 1972, Betty E. Chmaj

ISBN 0-912786-20-5

Printed in the United States of America

KNOW, INC.
P.O. Box 86031
Pittsburgh, Pa., 15221

TO

FLORENCE HOWE

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this book is admiringly dedicated.

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PART I: REPORT

PREFACE

ABOUT A BOOK WITHIN A BOOK CALLED "IMAGE, MYTH AND BEYOND"

As Volume Two of AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, this book is subdivided into the same three parts as what is now called Volume One: PART I, REPORT (on conditions for women in universities and the profession); PART II, COURSES (plus bibliography, programs, commentary, resources); and PART III, COLLAGE (chapters of substantive material on the theme itself). But if the most inportant part of Volume One, because of immediate impact in 1971, was Part I, the most important part of the present book is undoubtedly Part III.

Among other things, Part III contains a "book within a book," a reader on myths and images, stereotypes and perspectives—material of the kind that has become central to the women's studies courses that have emerged in American universities during the past three years. Included, for example, are chapters on stereotypes or images of women in American literature, American painting, American film and American comic books; chapters on the role of perspective (literary or historical) in the study of American women; chapters on myths surrounding American women—male and female fantasies, myths of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, myths that have inspired revenge or refutation, myth as compared to reality in several overlapping areas. Indeed, the theme "myth-and-reality revisited" is a dominant motif running through the Part III "collage" of chapters. The segments for this collage were selected not only for the sake of the information and insights they provide but also to illustrate modes of inquiry, to serve as models for the variety of approaches and the kinds of materials available to the scholar who wishes to make American women a subject for study.

When Volume Two was completed, however, it became apparent that much of its material—especially but not exclusively in Part III—was unified in another way: It pointed *beyond* the description of images and myths toward newer directions in women's studies, toward certain patterns of recognition that have begun to emerge in contemporary attitudes and scholarship. While accurate description of images, stereotypes, myths and perspectives is a necessary stage of scholarship in women's studies, since there can be no shock of recognition until an image or myth is identified and named, a later or deeper (and in this sense, more radical) analysis leads beyond initial shock—whether of male indignation or female outrage—to the discovery of larger patterns in American thought and culture, through the study of contexts, incidents, responses, relationships, evolutions. To underscore these new directions "beyond," as well as to acknowledge the integrity of this volume as a separate book above and beyond its relation to my previous work, I decided at the last hour upon the title, IMAGE, MYTH AND BEYOND.

For the record, however, it might be well to recall the way the book started out. When it became evident, by June of 1972, that the unexpected and gratifying response to AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, Volume One, told a story in itself about the interests and needs of women in American universities, I decided to spend part of a second summer in the Michigan woods on what I thought would be merely a short follow-up volume to that work. The material I had in mind to include will now be found in the first three chapters of Part I. It includes an assessment of progress during the critical year 1971-72 in the women's movement as it affected universities in general and American Studies in particular (Chapter One); a report on individual response (Chapter Two); and official response (Chapter Three) to the challenge represented by Volume One, particularly the twenty-two resolutions presented for action to the American Studies Association. Chapter Three includes the final amended version of these resolutions and part of the story of how they were passed, since these resolutions, so we have since learned, have set a precedent that other professional associations and other organizations of all kinds are now following. Chapter Four of Part I tells as much of the story as I am now free to recount of my own court case against Wayne State University, a case that seems likely, as we go to press, to drag on for some years to come, but a case that will finally, we hope, set an important national precedent not only for women but for interdisciplinary scholars of many kinds.

During the period after the appearance of Volume One, I also began to receive materials in the mails that deserved exposure—material on new courses and programs, permission to reprint David Potter's "American Women and the American Character," new essays with new perspectives on the study of American women. The question was how to make this material available as soon as possible to those who could make best use of it at a time when the processes of consciousness-raising in Academe, creating courses and programs in women's studies, and analyzing the issues in the larger contexts of American culture scholarship were still in a state of flux. The solution was suggested by the tripartite formula I had used to organize Volume One, along with the incredible energies of the women at KNOW, INC. Optimistically, we even sent out flyers announcing the early appearance of this volume.

But over the course of the year, Part III began to expand in directions of its own. First, I decided to design an "answer" to the Potter essay in such a way as to give readers a sampling of various kinds of material pertinent to the study of women in American history and society. Next, my other "samplings" on the theme of myth-and-reality had a way of turning into whole chapters. Further expansion was implicit in my desire to go beyond an "overview" format to include one example each from American history and American literature of close analysis of one particular event or work (Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's study of the Female Reform Society of the 1820s and Blanche Gelfant's study of sex in MY ANTONIA were my choices). Finally, I wanted to include some work of my Wayne State graduate students—in particular, Joe Baunoch, who was working on roles of women in American film, and Judy Gustafson, who had done two papers for me on stereotypes of women in American literature. When all these were added to another particular yearning—the desire to include *visual* images in the book, and to have images from a variety of fields of endeavor—the expansion of the book and the agonizing postponement of its publication became at last inevitable.

Timing was another factor. In July of 1972, I decided to accept an offer from California State University, Sacramento, for a Distinguished Visiting Professorship in American Studies. I would have to leave Michigan by the end of August, and since the offer for the DVP was backed by a permanent offer for a full professorship in the Department of Humanities (a joint appointment with Women's Studies), I would not know whether I would be returning to Detroit and Wayne State at all. The problem then was how to complete the project after I had boarded the plane heading west, material for chapters in my luggage but the people and equipment for preparing them for publication left behind in Detroit. It was Judy Gustafson who made all the difference to me at this point. Gustafson to whom I owe my greatest debt of gratitude; who began the summer helping out as typist and layout artist, and who ended by becoming almost a co-author. My thanks also to dear Georgia Green of the Finn Camp and my beloved student assistant Ann Sprague, for sharing typing duties at the critical moments. As CC Kleinsorge and Kathy Domurath were kindred spirits during the production of Volume One, Judy, Ann and Georgia have kinship rights to this one. As things turned out, I spent the better part of my year in California living a split-level academic's life—half of me teaching, giving lectures, attending regional and national conferences, meeting the new people at my new school; the other half struggling to get to the typewriter from time to time to turn out another chapter. For months and months, I have lived with the curious feeling that half of me was still on my summer vacation writing a book again called AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, which is how I spent my summer vacation in 1971, except that this time, the summer had extended right through the year and across the continent to California.

LITTLE THINGS DEPARTMENT: (1) Since reprints of individual chapters have already been requested, the reader will find some repetition of ideas included to facilitate the use of these chapters in college classes. (2) As in the first volume, decisions on questions of form—when to use or not to use quotation marks, freehand reproductions of graphic material, footnotes at the bottom of the page rather than at the end of chapters—have been made with an eye to clarity and readability rather than the MLA-Style-Sheet consistency I demand for student papers. (3) An index to both volumes has been promised by CC Kleinsorge, but until it appears, readers will have to lean on titles in the Table of Contents. These titles and various headings scattered throughout the volume, some readers will note, have a penchant for becoming long and coy and flippant. That I have always had a bent in this direction I do not deny, but I blame Gustafson and Kleinsorge, whose punning titles are zanier than mine, for encouraging my addiction for allusion in these directions.

Incidently, late responses to the ASA Questionnaire discussed in Volume One continued to trickle in during the year. While the overall results did not change the generalizations reported in that volume, the individual statements on these returns (numbered 90-96 for women, 800-816 for men) are quoted whenever possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: This time these names: my eleven-year-old daughter Maria, here in California with me, a constant source of encouragement and help. My now former husband John and my son John Stefan, together in Detroit this year but with us in spirit all year long. Judy Gustafson and Joe Baunoch, for contributions that can speak for themselves. Kathleen Church Plummer here in Sacramento, as well as Georgia and Ann in Michigan, for being so much more than typists to me. The people at KNOW, INC. for proving the truth that "Women Can Do Anything" on their own particular turf. All of the contributors of individual chapters, sections and poems. The journal MOVING OUT for its sisterly policy of allowing its material to be used freely by feminists. All of those people who sent the letters I can only mention in

Chapter Four, letters in support of my cause during my hearings in my case against Wayne State.

DEDICATION: Florence Howe, to whom this book is dedicated, must one day write her own story. She will have to tell it herself, for clearly no one else could presume to write as well. It will include the story of her role as first chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women of the Modern Languages Association, as vice president and now president of MLA, as Role Model Supreme for a whole generation of academic women for whom she has dared to speak and act. Like the story of Eleanor Roosevelt, which many of my students are just now discovering (she too was a role model to a generation, several generations, including my own), Florence Howe's story will stand as one more testimonial to how much, after all, a single person of principle and courage, combined with warm humanity, can do.

Betty Chmaj
Sacramento, California
April, 1973

CHAPTER ONE

ASSESSMENT: CAT-FEET CHANGE, ANGER AND PAIN

I have two tales to tell. They represent two halves of an assessment of the status of women in American universities as a result of the ferment and effort of the past few years. The first half of this assessment I have titled "The Change Comes on Little Cat Feet." The second is called "Confrontation in Anger and in Pain." The first represents the view that emerges when universities in general and American Studies in particular are examined from a broad or general perspective—politely, as it were, from the outside. The second represents a view from within—that is, from inside the women's movement itself, where the assessment of progress and conflict alike is far in advance of the general view, and far more painful.

For each of the two tales, I have selected a particular incident to provide a microcosmic view of patterns and trends to be found in the nation as a whole. Both were incidents that involved me personally, directly or indirectly, so my report on them is based on first-hand knowledge. But many readers will be able to substitute in their place other incidents involving other people, other places, other confrontations *of these same points of view.* As they read this chapter, I would earnestly urge them to do so.

I. "The Change Comes on Little Cat Feet"

"On everybody's list," said Murray Murphey, editor of AMERICAN QUARTERLY, "Mary Turpie is one of the great people in the field, and she deserves every honor that American Studies can give her. I am just delighted she was willing to accept." I was calling Murphey, during the summer of 1972, to ask him to repeat the sentiments he had expressed to the American Studies Association Council the previous April when he had nominated Minnesota's Mary Turpie to the quarterly's editorial board, making her the first woman to serve in that capacity in the journal's entire history. It had been a gracious statement, and the part I'd thought I remembered best was a comment to the effect that the invitation to her was "undoubtedly long overdue," since she was then just one year short of retirement. Now, however, Murray was inclined to stress his gratitude to her for taking on the task despite her personal situation—an invalid father whose need for attention prevented Mary from attending national meetings. "She's always been a stalwart soul, and it's typical of her to take on the job anyway," Murray said, "and a grand thing for the field that its preeminent woman should be willing to accept."

But vaguely aware of the interesting historical irony in what was taking place—namely, that the University of Minnesota's American Studies chairman was being complimented, in the grand manner, by the chairman of a chief national competitor, the University of Pennsylvania, which had purchased the QUARTERLY from Minnesota in the first place in 1951—I was still waiting to hear something said about "long overdue." Anything else? I asked. Well, he didn't know that I'd elect to quote him on this part but "I feel that the editorial board of the quarterly ought to have the most distinguished people in the field invited to serve and this is only just, therefore, that she be a member of the board." There was no mistaking the generosity of intent in the gesture toward Mary, and I was not disposed to recall to him the events leading to her nomination or probe for innuendo in his doubts about whether I would quote him. The truth is it was rather remarkable, under the circumstances, that Murray was able to put his sentiments into words at all, for I could hear the sounds of romping youngsters in the background, and he had to excuse himself twice during the long-distance call while he ordered them sternly to pipe down. I was sympathetic, and after we had managed to discuss several other matters, I was relieved to be able to leave him to his fatherly duties.

After hanging up, however, I reflected for a long while on the several levels of irony in what had just happened. Here was a man who had become both editor of the profession's official journal and chairman of the American Civilization department at the university where the profession's national headquarters[1] was located who was yet young enough to be tending to small children. The recipient of his sincere and lavish praise, on the other hand, was of retirement age and single. She had been a prime mover in American Studies for the better part of its entire history, had been there at Minnesota when Tremaine Macdowell had founded the QUARTERLY, had co-authored his obituary notice in the journal in 1959, describing him as "one of the chief architects" of American Studies in the U.S. and succeeded him as secretary-treasurer of the Minnesota-Dakotas regional association. She did not, however, succeed him as chairman of the Minnesota program — in fact, she was not named to the post until 1965. Nor was she asked to succeed him then to the quarterly board; the position of associate editor he had held until 1956 was abolished the following year. Over the years since Macdowell's death, several other Minnesotans, all male, have served on the board. The occasion when Mary Turpie herself was asked, however, required extraordinary praise to justify her election. An extraordinary effort.

For the history that immediately preceded Mary's appointment provides a pattern that summarizes, at least on one important level, how change has begun to come about both in the profession and in universities generally during the past two years. Like Sandburg's fog, the change has come silently, on cat feet, until somehow we have tended to get the feeling it has been there all along.

Here is the story of the AMERICAN QUARTERLY incident. Among the statistics included in the report of the Commission on the Status of Women, at the very bottom of a ladder of percentages, were four big double-0 goose eggs (0.0%) recording the number of women who had served as the association's president, executive secretary, editor of AQ, or "even" as members of the editorial board (AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I, pp. 56 & 57). Among the resolutions submitted to the association in October of 1971 was one that called for proportional representation of women on all programs, committees, councils and the editorial board. The resolution was not one that received opposition at the time presented; I had grouped it, in fact, with two others that applied the measure of proportional representation to association activities, and all three passed handily, virtually without debate. They were part of the official record, therefore, when in a memorandum dated January, 1972, Council members were apprised of the QUARTERLY editor's nominations for members of the board for the coming year. All six of the persons on the list were men. The memorandum added that unless the executive secretary heard from Council members to the contrary "within a reasonable length of time," he would assume the Council had approved these nominations.

Upon receiving the memo, I wrote to both the editor and the executive secretary saying I could scarcely believe what I saw and expressing the hope that the absence of a single woman's name on the list must be an oversight. I also sent letters to twelve other members of the Commission and Council informing them of the six male nominations. "This is in direct violation of the resolution passed unanimously at the last Council meeting in Washington, Resolution No. 13, which calls for the Executive Committee and the Council to see to it that women are represented on the board in proportion to their numbers in the association (approximately 20%)." I urged that letters be sent immediately because of the "reasonable-length-of-time" proviso. I do not know how many actually wrote, but three persons sent me copies of strongly worded protests. Before the second had arrived, however, I had heard from Murphey, who pointed out that since he was not a member of the Executive Committee, he had not been apprised of the resolution at the time he submitted his recommendations. Under the circumstances, he explained, it would be possible to change only one of the names submitted, and he would propose Mary Turpie.

In April, Murray further explained that the rotation principle had been a long-standing policy for determining the tenure of board members but that it had somehow become confused a few years earlier, before he had become editor (he believed it was when Bob Sklar had been nominated in addition to others, in an effort to respond to the challenge of the Radical Caucus). As a result, there were not really four new openings to be filled, since three were being named for continuation on the rotation principle, but only one, the fourth, which he had felt ought to be used to renominate a man whose tenure was shortened by the confusion of the earlier years—it had seemed the polite thing to do. However, it was possible to change the recommendation for the one open nomination, and this he was glad to do. At the Council meeting, he nominated Professor Turpie with his graceful statement, nothing whatever being said about Resolution No. 13 or the letters of protest. Whereupon I asked for the privilege of moving wholehearted acceptance of the editor's recommendations, the motion passed, and we moved to the next item of business. All very quiet and civilized. The sound of cat feet.

Thinking about it afterward, I recalled Barbee-Sue Rodman's account of her grievance against her college for refusing her promotion, an account I had included at the end of Chapter One of AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I as an illustration I felt might give women hope that their own grievances might be as successfully resolved. Professor Rodman had found the courage to write to national headquarters of the American Association of University Professors, simultaneously informing her college president that she had done so, when she learned that while male colleagues who had been granted tenure had received promotions, she had not, and she sought to be given reasons. Since national AAUP refused to act until all local remedies had been exhausted, she prepared to petition the faculty for an ad hoc grievance board. The juxtaposition of the second sentence after the first in the next two statements of her account provides a memorable instance of cat-feet diplomacy:

> Since Claremont's last faculty meeting of that year was spent entirely in agitated debate over our minority admissions policy, I postponed any action on the grievance committee until this fall.
>
> In September, however, I learned from our new acting president that a check of the minutes of the Board of Trustees had revealed

> that I had, in fact, been promoted by the Board at the same time tenure was granted.

Oops. You understand, Professor Rodman, it was all a mistake, a natural mistake, since I'm new in this job and have just now read the board's minutes, but it seems you had been promoted all along. So there was really no reason for all your agitation, was there? Or all her agony.

Rodman quoted an AAUP officer who advised faculty, in a phrase that strikes me as prophetically apt, not to become discouraged by "the ordinary viscosity of the academic bureaucracy" that will delay and delay the resolution of cases. How quickly the "viscosity" can melt into fog and the fog move in on cat feet once administrators decide to act, however, is illustrated in the case of the late Dr. Maria Goeppert Mayer, the Nobel-prize-winning physicist whose status was literally changed overnight at San Diego State College. Geraldine Rickman, who has since moved to the University of Cincinnati and was told the story to Wayne State University administrators, recounts how she was wakened in the middle of the night (due to the time difference between Sweden and California) with the news that Dr. Mayer had won the prize and was asked to assist in the action taken to prevent embarrassment to the university. By the time the press picked up the story the following morning, Professor Mayer's salary had been doubled, her laboratory space increased, and the research assistants she had been begging for promptly provided.[2]

But the strangest cases of cat-feet changes are the reports of mysterious pay raises to faculty women, even during Nixon's economic freeze, with little if any explanation given. I myself received such a notice on a salmon-colored sheet from the payroll office *after* I had filed suit against the university in Federal District Court (but predated to be effective prior to that date) and well after my case had been filed along with others for the investigations by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. A phone call to the payroll office elicited only the information that "your department initiated the raise"—which must have meant the department chairman, with the concurrence of the dean, both men who had been named as defendants in the law suit. In October of 1971, the CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION carried a story that included this report:

> At the University of Wisconsin, where HEW investigators made visits last summer and early this year, Cyrena Pondrom, professor of English and assistant to the chancellor for women's affairs, said "there had been a very substantial movement toward equity" in pay for women faculty members.
>
> Despite the current wage-price freeze, the university had obtained a ruling from the federal government permitting "adjustments of salaries in order to correct inequities identified as resulting from discrimination by sex." Mrs. Pondrom said "several hundred" women would receive such pay adjustments this fall. "Most of the cases were put forward voluntarily by women's own departments," she said.
>
> As some institutions begin reviewing their women employees' job records for evidence of discrimination, a few institutions say that through efforts made during the past few years, and without the prodding of HEW, they already have gone a long way toward eliminating salary inequities among male and female employees.[3]

When male administrators and faculty are questioned about salary inequities, as in MLA's Affirmative Action Questionnaire or the ASA Questionnaire on

Women, the majority have continued to insist that salary changes to insure equity are unnecessary because equity already exists. (80% of the men and 51% of the women in the ASA survey did not believe women received lower salaries; 72% of the departments surveyed by the MLA Affirmative Action Questionnaire saw no need for salary changes to insure equity.[4]) Yet one study after another appears to verify that inequities *do* exist—some showing, moreover, that the inequities are greatest for the *most* academically qualified women (La Sorte), others estimating that to equalize salaries would require a compensatory average raise of more than $1000 (Austin and Bayer, using 1968-69 standards for measurement).[5] Since unequal pay for equal work is clearly against the law—specifically so since Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was amended in March, 1972, to include all educational institutions among those prohibited from discriminating in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin—university administrators recognize the wisdom of correcting inequities as quietly as possible, under cover of the popularly-held beliefs, as it were, before HEW government investigators appear on campus to subpoena records or before pressure groups demanding that salary figures be made public succeed in embarrassing them. One gets the vision of a million invisible cat feet silently moving through the payroll offices of the nation's universities, leaving behind neat balances on the computers and stunned delight on the faces of faculty women. An altogether pleasant vision!

The trouble with change that comes like Sandburg's fog, however, is that it's bound to obscure one's vision of reality. The most frequent and bedevilling attitude that women have found among sympathetic male colleagues has been one that combined good will with ignorance—they were *for* equality but *against* change. Often they insist on believing that change is unnecessary (because equality already exists) even in the face of evidence of inequality in their own departments of their own colleges. One sometimes gets the suspicion that the purpose of cat-foot tactics, when the disparity between belief and reality becomes too great to tolerate, is to change the reality stealthily so that it confirms the beliefs, rather than exposing the extent to which the beliefs were in error. More important, in terms of obscuring reality, small gains won by large efforts can be illusory. They can seem at one and the same time too small to make an issue about and more important than they really are. Some champions of change may want to inflate their importance in order to justify the effort that went into the attempt, while others will turn cynical, doubting that the effort was worth it—especially when male administrators end up taking credit and blaming those who challenge them for "misunderstanding" their intent. The election of a profession's preeminent woman merely to the editorial board of a small quarterly journal seems more like tokenism than the beginning of a "second American Revolution," as Maria del Drago has characterized the woman's movement.

SYMBOLS AND TOKENS, QUOTAS AND FIRSTS

Mary Turpie becomes the first woman to serve on the AMERICAN QUARTERLY editorial board; Nina Baym becomes the second. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg of Pennsylvania becomes the first woman to win the annual award for the best article to appear in the QUARTERLY in 1971. Gail Parker becomes the first woman selected to be president of Bennington College. I become the first woman to be nominated to the presidency of the American Studies Association (two years in a row) and the first to be named to a Distinguished Visiting Professorship in American Studies. Across the country, women are being elected for the first time to presidencies, deanships, associate deanships, department headships, boards of trustees, union and AAUP presidencies, and to a variety of other administrative posts of high visibility.

In April of 1972, Charles Bassett reported that twenty-one out of 190 American Studies programs were headed or co-headed by women. While nine of these were at primarily women's colleges, the percentage of 11%, while nothing to crow about, is a respectable figure compared to percentages of women in administrative posts of universities as short a time as a year before. In the top two professorial ranks, where women have been visibly excluded in the past and where efforts must be made to recruit more women, according to the government's Affirmative Action requirements, progress has also been made (see the reports by the Association of American Colleges' Project on the Status and Education of Women); while I have no figures on American Studies as such, it seems plausible that improvements at these levels will begin to be visible by the 1972-73 academic year, for which decisions will probably be made the previous December. In the area of hiring new personnel, the picture does not appear to look nearly as promising on a national scale (for either men or women), except for some conspicuous token hiring into departments or institutions with peculiarly poor records, and for appointments (especially joint appointments) to teach courses in women's studies.

The pattern that has revealed colleges of "high prestige" to have the most embarrassing records of sex discrimination seems likely to be challenged through a series of token gestures, symbols, and "firsts." In the MLA Affirmative Action survey, although the great majority of departments (86%) had not instituted special procedures for recruiting and hiring women, those that were considering them (nine departments) or had already instituted procedures (twenty-one) were among the departments with the lowest number of women on the faculty.[6] It is interesting that Harvard, which had had a conspicuously poor record in hiring faculty women, (only six women of four hundred and twenty-one tenured professors on the faculty of arts and sciences, although 22% of the students are women) has been one of the few Ivy League colleges conspicuously in the vanguard in promoting change. The resolutions passed by the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences were reported in Volume One; my favorite piece of evidence, however, is the news that when the members of Phi Delta Kappa, an honorary education association, voted more than three to one to continue to bar women from membership (after charges had been filed against the society in 1970 by the Women's Equity Action League), the Harvard Chapter voted to withdraw from the association until women were admitted.

The word "quota" has a double-edged meaning when applied to the question of women in universities. Quotas on admissions are anathema to feminists, who are seeking legal rulings against them. Stanford maintains a 60% male majority, Princeton keeps a quota of three men to every woman, and Yale—whose notoriety as a sexist institution earned a special article in the TIME Magazine issue of March, 1972, devoted to women, as well as the book by Lever and Schwartz, WOMEN AT YALE—has in a spirit of conscience admitted 823 women in a single year but without expanding facilities and without decreasing male enrollment, already sufficient to deliver on President Brewster's promise of "1000 male leaders" every year. What such quotas mean, of course, is that women must have higher grades to be admitted than men, and also that the women admitted tend to excel above men because they have had to have better qualifications and abilities to gain entrance in the first place.

When "quota system" refers, however, to the principle of proportionate representation that feminists suggest as a fairness doctrine to measure the minimum percentage of women who ought to be hired, promoted, or represented, the opposition comes from the other direction. Despite the studies showing that women in professional pools, especially married women, are more qualified, rather than less qualified, then their male counterparts (see Astin, THE WOMAN DOCTORATE IN AMERICA), the argument that there are "no qualified women" or not enough to fill quotas is still heard. Here is how the argument surfaced in a letter to me—from a Bennington woman, before Professor Parker was hired—sent to explain why she refused to answer last year's ASA questionnaire:

> . . . I find the questions so badly phrased, at least for our situation, that all of my answers [would] strike me as misleading . . . . Bennington has posed problems for women faculty, mostly problems related to the attitudes of women students. This situation has altered significantly in recent years. There is now considerable enthusiasm for adding not only more women faculty but a woman president. It has been very hard to find qualified women because for years women did not value professional life or pursue it realistically. We have lacked women candidates. (91)

Those ignorant of the evidence on qualified women continue to make the mistake of pitting the "quota system" against the "merit system" and assume the latter would mean fewer, rather than more, women on the faculties. The following exchange is suggestive of an effective way to call attention to the evidence:

MALE CHEMISTRY TEACHER: I favor equal pay for equal work, but I'm absolutely opposed to quotas. The merit system is the only honorable system worthy of a university.

THE ONLY WOMAN CHEMIST ON THE FACULTY: I agree. A true merit system is what most feminists would settle for. But since that would mean more women than men on the faculty, so that a great deal of wholesale firing of the less qualified males would have to occur, others of us are willing to settle for a quota system as a stop-gap measure until a merit system can be implemented.[7]

The arguments for and against "firsting" are becoming as well known as the arguments over quota systems, sometimes assumed to be an alternative approach to getting women on the faculty. Proponents of "firsting" (dramatizing the "first" woman to hold a particular high office, obtaining a token woman for a committee or a program, getting symbolic visible representation through the mere presence of women in positions of power) argue that college women need role models to look up to in places of high visibility to show them who they might become (for instance, by majoring in a particular field). They say that gestures to place women into symbolic positions are necessary not only to demonstrate the good will of an institution but also to compensate for the years of discriminatory treatment. A university that cannot now afford to implement across-the-board quotas due to the economic freeze can at least show its good intentions by such gestures at "firsting."

Opponents reply that a few women in high positions are no substitute for the fundamental, large-scale change that is really necessary, which quota systems can begin to bring about. Dramatic forms of "firsting" such as jumping women faculty in rank and salary can become the means, these opponents say, for a university to get a positive image "on the cheap," without at the same time moving toward really significant change. The token women brought in as the firsters, they say, are often Uncle Moms with commitments to academic professionalisms and a hatred of feminism, hostile to women's rights and women's studies, reluctant to see implementation of the government guidelines, elitists at their worst. The suspicious see American universities this year to a large degree attempting to hide from the law behind the skirts of the firster.

One dimension of the national pattern recently called to my attention by a colleague in the history department here, which has a far larger proportion of bright, active women faculty members than most history departments—women who can disagree entirely in political viewpoints yet work together and join together socially with noticeably greater ease than their male colleagues—is that the smaller, less prestigious colleges may be the places to study today to see where the future is coming from. Because women have been banned from the colleges with reputations as "prestigious," they have clustered in colleges just below this level, where they may turn out to be the strongest members in the department and on the faculty. At first blush, they will seem "overqualified" for their institutions, but over a period of time, as their presence (along with the presence of others rejected from the "prestigious" institutions for reasons of race, religion, political views, failure to publish, etc.) effects a change in these very institutions, it seems highly likely that they will help to force a reexamination of the measures used to determine what constitutes "prestige." The net result, I predict, will be a leveling-down process that reduces the reputations of the prestigious institutions, accompanied by a leveling-up process that advances the reputations of the institutions that have acquired large numbers of strong women. This prediction, I realize, is based on two corollary assumptions: (1) that the prestigious colleges, while making token changes on their faculties and accepting the tuition monies of large numbers of women *students,* will not move fast enough or far enough to capture the leadership such strong women can provide; and (2) that the momentum toward sisterliness on faculties will continue to bind women together, rather than forcing them toward envy of one another as in the past, so that their individual strength will be augmented by their supportiveness toward one another in achieving high goals for their universities.

II. "CONFRONTATION IN ANGER AND IN PAIN"

The other half of my assessment of conditions for women in American universities is based on a different perspective, the perspective from within the women's movement as it was affected by changes evident by 1973. To appreciate this perspective, it might be helpful to recall John Higham's terms *consensus* and *conflict* as labels for two distinct ways of viewing American history. Allowing for a certain flexibility in translation, Higham's dichotomy is useful to American Studies for describing polarities in areas other than the one he had in mind. The latest of these is the women's movement, which is today marked by a decided schism within. "The conflict in ideologies is so severe that it may be beyond reconciliation," Catherine Stimpson wrote in despair in the winter of 1972.[8] On the one hand are those whose devotion to the new unity of sisterhood ("consensus") is so great that it would discourage divisions in the ranks of women ("diversity" is accepted; "divisiveness" is not, but it is not always easy to tell the difference). On the other hand are those who call for a frank recognition of internal conflicts and a "struggle" revolving around these differences, differences based primarily on class but also on race and sexuality. The schism carries with it a number of ironic elements. There are, as I hope my discussion will show, old and new versions of "consensus" emerging. In terms of past political alignments, many women who sided with the "conflict" side of Higham's polarity when it was first advanced, sharing with the New Left during the 1960s the suspicion that the "consensus" approach to American history tended to blur valid differences and negate perspectives of the groups at the bottom, are today to be found on the other side, insofar as they favor the "new" kind of consensus in the women's movement.

The division of opinion *within* the women's movement had been emerging in various ways at about the same time that cat-feet changes had been taking place on the outside, and it consisted of a number of overlapping concerns. The one that led to Stimpson's despair is perhaps the dimension that is most pronounced within women's caucuses across the country today—namely, the tendency to distrust all women in positions of authority, a result, Stimpson feels of "the dislike women evidence for other women" as a result of their conditioning."The distrust had a special mode within academic circles: the public denunciation of women who have conventional credentials (e.g., publications or the PhD) . . . Every woman knows the language in which these charges are coded and publicized: 'star,' 'elitist,' 'someone who rips off the movement,' or 'academic'." The distrust can also extend to the housewife, however, and the dogmatism of the accusers can frighten the academic and non-academic alike. "The assumption, oddly totalitarian, implies that there is only one pure way to either justice or perfection. It both denies feminism the fertility of avant-garde thought and takes up the energy of women who must repeatedly defend their good faith....Ironically they often patronize the non-academic women. Announcing that a PhD can only befuddle an ordinary housewife, they put down the housewife as much as the PhD."[9]

Another dimension of concern is over the issue of collective action as opposed to the "male-oriented" traditional systems based on hierarchies of assigned roles. The "shock of recognition" (see Chapter Two) that makes sisterhood possible is very real, and the possibility of collectivity based on a recognition that crosses all boundaries can excite the imaginations of many who are seeking new modes as well as new ideas for the women's movement. But the distance between the *belief* in collectivity and the actual *practice* on various campuses had discouraged many; witness the title of an essay by Joreen, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," which deals with the star system, elitism, and internal procedures of women's groups. If the concerns over collectivity and its possibilities and problems are comparatively new, the concerns over the subservience of the women's movement to some other movement also calling for a general cultural overhaul—usually socialist or Marxist in orientation—are very old indeed. Nothing will arouse ire more quickly today than some of the clichés in current use—for instance, the accusation that the women's movement is essentially a "white middle-class" phenomenon, the counter-accusation that "women still tied to the male Left" in their thinking cannot be true feminists.[10]

There are other dimensions of concern involved in the internal schisms of the women's movement, and indeed, it would seem fair to describe the current state of opinion as a state of flux rather than one involving two distinct sides. Yet in specific situations, sides or camps may well emerge—or *seem* to emerge, baffling most of the onlookers.

> Numerous references were made during the final day's meeting to the two "camps" present at the conference, neither of which were identified to the hundreds of women who came . . . many women are not versed in the elitist coded language in which these ideological battles usually take place and shouldn't be subjected to the status of audience while camp members conduct their debates...

The words are those of Rosemarie King,[11] adding her evaluation to the West Coast Conference on Women's Studies after it was held, the conference which I have selected as the incident to illustrate in microcosmic form the complexities of the schism to be found in the women's movement as it is affecting American universities today.

The Conference took place over the three-day Memorial Day weekend in 1973, when nearly 700 women from all over the nation, but primarily from West Coast areas (where Women's Studies, as Part II of this volume indicates, is closer to the avant garde of the women's movement than the rest of the nation), traveled to California's state capitol to attend a conference that took as its title, WOMEN'S STUDIES AND FEMINISM—SURVIVAL IN THE SEVENTIES. The relevance of this conference and the intensity of the emotions that surfaced during the deliberations are themselves, it seems to me, products of an attitude of openness and seriousness in the women's movement that I have not observed elsewhere in the nation, except in small pockets of concern.[12] With emotions over the incident still strong, I am inclined to quote directly from documents as much as possible, minimizing editorial comment until the end of the discussion. Florence Howe, who came from New York to attend (and who has probably attended as many women's studies conferences as anyone in the academic world), said afterward that she felt it was "the most significant women's studies conference I have ever attended." I agree with that assessment of the *importance* of the occasion. Whatever editorializing and interpretation on my part emerges in the discussion of the events I am about to report stem from that conviction.

The West Coast Conference officially began with a panel of speakers, one of whom was Joan Hoff Wilson. As a member of the conference planning committee, she was concerned that a certain brand of "internecine ideological factionalism" was emerging in the women's movement generally (she is active on the national level as a member of the Organization of American Historians' Commission on the Status of Women) and was about to erupt locally to disrupt the conference. "Survival in the Seventies" was a theme she had used before in speaking to women's groups, and she decided to use the occasion of her intorductory address to warn against the brand of "socialist feminism" she saw en-dangering the movement at the very time it was faced with the need to survive. Beginning her speech by placing the women's movement into recent historical context, and noting the change that had taken place in this context ("So far the new feminism has been practically the only radical movement to thrive in the midst of Nixonomics"), Wilson affirmed her belief that Women's Studies Programs "should and must" continue to derive their basic direction and impetus from "a *broadly-based* women's movement." "It is only in this fashion that we can prevent women's studies from becoming 'a place where women are merely an object of study' isolated from the basic needs of off-campus women and hence unable to contribute to the liberation of all women, rather than simply one privileged group of educated women." The insistence upon community between academic women and all others, between women's studies and the women's movement is clear from this statement. Yet the time would come when some at the conference would forget this part of her speech and brand Wilson, along with others possessing academic credentials, as elitists trying to dictate decieions for all women.

But, Wilson went on to say, this did not mean all was well in women's studies or the women's movement. She cited a devastating list of problems to be confronted to make "survival in the seventies" possible despite evidence of backlash, entrenchment of male resistance, and new forms of sexism, adding up to a discouraging picture indeed of "negative legacies inherited from the 1960s" and "a future that is rapidly being forged without our consulation or consent."[13] Then came the controversial part of her argument:

> It looks as though we are in for a hard decade even if women continue to organize actively on and off campuses, particularly because we have not yet been able to devise "formal, effective anti-elitist policies and structures." Above all else we should not now retreat into the anti-intellectualism of simplistic solutions based on downward mobility or drag out all the old radical political theories based on European or Asian or Latin American models just because growth has made our problems more complicated. If the 1960s taught us anything it should have been the futility of nonindigenous political theories, of internecine ideological factionalism, and of confrontation politics. (This latter is sometimes known as the "politics of masturbation" because it can be so immediately satisfying and repeated indefinitely without fear of producing anything.)
>
> Revolutionary theory and radical politics borrowed from other countries having no relation to either the language and values or internal objective conditions within the United States have not been the answer in the past and I currently see no new or unique uses being made of them by socialist women's groups today. One only has to remember with sadness the blind belief of feminists of the 1910s, who were convinced that the class analysis of socialist philosophy contained the answer for the economic ills of society and could be combined with a feminism which would restructure the value system of the culture as a whole, to recognize the "oldness" and not the "newness" of the contemporary socialist feminists. Or perhaps what we simply should do is to recall Robin Morgan's essay, "Goodbye To All That" and ask ourselves if the current popularity of socialist feminism within the women's movement is not saying to us: "Hello, Here We Are Again."

At this point, Wilson went on to make her appeal for "a new language and new approaches not only to politics but all aspects of life—a uniquely woman's approach, a woman's perspective." She described the model for change she called "a female culture" (I am not yet clear on where it is similar to *androgyny* as a Utopian model for the future and where it differs),[14] and argued hard on its behalf. She touched on the sensitive issue of the belief in collective as against structured leadership and suggested female culture was the new context in which a crucial test was taking place: "If collectivity versus individualism is finally to be resolved it will be a major philosophical as well as political breakthrough requiring as much intellectual perseverance as previous major advances in Western thought. There is simply no intellectual shortcut to establishing a female culture, regardless of the good intentions, good vibes, or male political theories currently in evidence. So far, we have only tentatively begun building such a female culture" and a "superhuman effort" will be necessary in view of the condition facing us.

> So survival is the name of the game and this requires concentration on creation of the new rather than exclusive focus on destruction of the old as far as women are concerned. At the moment I do not sense much practical or intellectual appreciation of this concept within the women's movement or in most women's studies programs to the degree that they reflect the broader national scene. *I say this because there are strong indications that the women's movement is on the verge of commiting suicide or in the throes of a gigantic death wish struggle.* At the moment it appears to be determined to self-destruct before having made but the most superficial attempt at establishing a female culture based on feminist principles. At best it has made limited gains in the area of women's rights which we all know have largely benefitted white, middle-class women. Only a feminist cultural overhaul can permeate all levels of society and permanently change women's heads as well as their life styles. *White liberal guilt-tripping which hides behind the facade of tired, socialist theories has not and will not do so . . .* The success or failure of the conference planners to prevent this first problem-solving women's studies conference from dissolving into movement infighting pure and simple will be but one small indication of whether or not these suicidal impulses are reaching a critical stage. It is conceivable that truly feminist-oriented women's studies programs (and individual feminists themselves) might *have to consider withdrawing from the movement should mindless, political factionalism based on simplistic versions of class analysis ultimately prevail* at this conference or in the movement nationally, as it did to the demise of the New Left in the late 1960. *This does not mean that we do not recognize the differences which divide us* as women, but it does mean that *we should try to avoid nourishing outselves on each other's blood like female vampires* . . . . We can shape the future for ourselves as women but we must decide soon whether it is to be a diverse and flexible future based on a female culture or a narrow and ideologically or sexually inhibiting one which simply finds women emulating male models. (All emphasis added.)

The address received a standing ovation, and the planners felt the conference was off to a good start. On the evaluation sheets filled out by those who lasted through the entire three days, the opening session was rated very high more often than not—very low by those who vociferously opposed the views presented, but high not only by those who supported them, but by a large number who supported the Monday Resolution that gave vent, to some extent, to an opposite view. Wilson herself, however, added a Postscript to her address after the conference declaring her belief that despite the standing ovation for her address, "the basic principles upon which it was based were substantially repudiated at the final session three days later."

The conference proceeded through two days devoted primarily to workshops on various subjects, speeches by Robin Morgan and Rita Mae Brown, and a variety of presentations—plays, movies, poetry, slideshows (these last receiving the highest ratings, without question, by those evaluating the conference's successes). By Sunday night the currents of discontent had led members attending some of the workshops to band together in the desire to issue a statement criticizing certain aspects of the conference—aspects which ranged from details related to planning to overall philosophical disagreements. Macie MacCormack, Conference Coordinator, felt it was important to provide facilities and answer questions, as well as correct gross errors, in order to allow those who wished to make their statement the fullest opportunity to do so. It was decided to turn the final session scheduled for Monday, at which reports from the various workshops would have been heard, into a general plenary session with "an open mike," chaired by Florence Howe, with speeches limited in time and anyone who wished allowed to speak. The session was indeed an exciting one—frightening to some because of the initial catcalls and hissing which greeted opinions some members of the audience disagreed with, exhiliarating to others who had never seen that kind of openness to all points of view in such an assembly before, "significant" regardless of its outcome to many who saw in the configurations and dynamics of the debate an important development in the women's movement in which large numbers of women were participating.

The session began with the presentation of a resolution drafted by the dissidents the night before, most of which I reproduce herewith:

TO: PRESENT AND FUTURE PLANNERS OF WOMEN'S STUDIES CONFERENCES
FROM: THE WORKSHOPS AND CAUCUSES ON CLASS, RACE, LESBIANISM, HETEROSEXUAL BIAS AND ETHNIC STUDIES: CONFLICT OR COOPERATION?*

**Note:* All italics are mine. It is my way of calling attention to particular points, phrasings or styles of address that seem most significant to my presentation of this exchange—BC.

Because we respect the hard work that has been done by conference planners, we wish out of care and gratitude to share our feelings about some problems that have arisen. While our criticisms are directed at the perspectives of the planners of the conference, *we nevertheless understand that these problems come from the society as a whole and are reflected in the whole of the women's movement.*

Until very late and only under heavy pressure, there was at this conference little space for political struggle. Instead, the assumption has been as Joan Wilson suggested on the opening panel that we are all women and therefore are united in sisterhood. We believe, however, that among us political differences do exist—differences in race, in class, in sexuality. We further believe that solidarity among us as sisters will be the result of

1. a clear identification of our differences,
2. *a confrontation in anger and in pain as well as in care of those differences,* and
3. a struggle together around those differences.

A recognition of our differences is **not** "devisive" or "male" or "Trotskyist." In addition to this name-calling, the control of the microphone in general sessions has been one more barrier to creative struggle.

We feel restricted by the emphasis on the **form** of Women's Studies to the exclusion of the **content** of Women's Studies, i.e., the exclusion of our differences in race, class and sexuality. We find the planners' omissions of this content evidenced not only in the planning of the conference but in the attitudes and assumptions of the planners themselves.

HETEROSEXUAL BIAS

The heterosexual assumptions of the planning committee are evidenced in:

1. the omission of workshops on lesbianism and on heterosexual bias, even after they had been requested early by participants;
2. the necessity for the lesbian caucus to do the work of the committee in organizing occasions for women to celebrate being together as women—such as dance or sports.
3. the lack of even token recognition of the long and intense struggle of women-identified women for **all** women's liberation, and of the essential function of lesbian ideology within the movement as a whole.

For the open lesbians here at this conference and for those lesbian sisters who must protect their careers by silence but who are nevertheless giving of their energies to this conference, *we now affirm the woman-identified woman and the political statement of her womanhood.*

CLASS BIAS

Throughout this conference, it has been assumed that all of the women attending have money, and that people who do not have money are to be blamed for that fact. Many women could not afford the $4.00 registration fee; it should have been on a sliding scale according to ability to pay. Women who could not afford to register ahead of time were penalized by having to pay an additional $1.00 at the door. Women who did not have the money were humiliated by being offered "scholarships" to the conference, or intimidated into paying more than they could afford. The San Diego contingent, 26 women, informed the conference planners that they could not and would not pay $104.00 for registration. When they gave a donation of $25.00, they were told by the planners that "it was a rip-off."

Most of the women who traveled to this conference did so at their own expense. Although a list of local motels was provided, we feel that greater attempts at providing free or cheap housing should have been made. Furthermore, poor women cannot afford restaurant prices for 3 days of meals. We believe that the fact that many women have had practical problems with child care at this conference *is a direct product of class bias.* Only middle- and upper-class women have the money to pay for child care and babysitting. No mother could count on the child care provided at the conference. Children do not fade away at 5 o'clock. The responsibility for children should have been assumed by the planning committee at no cost to the participants.

The focus on state universities *excluding community colleges, high schools, and non-institutional education, reflects academic elitism.*

RACISM

The assumption of women who control this conference is that race is not an important issue. They also overlook the racism of white women. We believe that solidarity between the women's movement and movements against racism is not charity. The pedestal that many white women find oppressive rests on the racist exploitation of third world people. Thus it is necessary to *integrate an understanding of racism into all phases* of a conference.

In her speech on the Saturday panel, Kirsten Amundsen said that women's studies must reach poor and third world women who are "less fortunate than us," assuming that white middle-class women have the answers which poor and/or third world women need to get.[15] We believe that white women have a lot to learn from third world women.

When Robin Morgan proudly announced that a new group of black women in New York had discovered "true feminism," she presumed to judge, as a white woman, what the correct political action and analysis is for black women.

Groups from both San Jose State and San Diego State requested space for workshops to deal with issues of race and class in the women's movement. They were shunted into the category of "special interest" seminars, such a feminist psychology, women in literature, women in the media, etc. When the San Diego women persevered, space was granted for these "extra" workshops in the Education Building, separate and away from the space where the rest of the conference was going on. This extra workshop, which was entitled "Racism in the Women's Movement" by the San Diego women who planned it was retitled "A Feminist Perspective on Race" by the conference planners, and thereby redirected.

Joan Wilson's speech about the possibilities for the future criticized science fiction as sexist, but ignored its racism.

The one workshop that dealt with either racism or the realities of third world women that was planned for by the conference committee, "Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies," did not even ask some of the panel participants to take part until one day before the conference, although we understand that this workshop has been planned for at least two months. Generally, third world women were not contacted about this panel at all. *It is also racist to call the caucus of third world women the Ethnic Women's Caucus, rather than Third World Women's Caucus.*

Generally, third world women were not contacted about this conference. The assumption is made that women's studies classes are only in women's studies programs, and not in ethnic studies programs.

INTERNATIONALISM

It seems that the women who organized the conference assume that the struggles of women in other countries are irrelevant to women here. We believe we have much to learn from our sisters in other places. Some of the main speakers have denied or ignored the ways that national liberation movements have strengthened the women's movement here. . . .

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND WOMEN'S STUDIES

During the course of this conference there has been an underlying assumption that women's studies and the women's movement are two very separate things. Many of us were told weeks ago that political issues such as class, race, lesbianism, and capitalism should not be discussed at this conference, that these were issues for the women's movement and **not** women's studies.

Another assumption has been that women's studies have provided and will provide the *main source of correct ideology for the women's movement*. These kinds of assumptions seem to say that *women in the academic community can make decisions for all women*. We believe the ideology of the women's movement will develop out of struggles for survival and for political power on and off campus. We believe that in order to participate in women's studies we must be an integral part of the women's movement as a whole.

CONCLUSION

We do not intend these criticisms to negate our gratitude or admiration for the women who were truly heroic taking on the tasks of organizing this conference. But, having come so far, as Kirsten Amundsen has said, we cannot go back. *Our understanding of struggle assures us that both we and our sisters will listen to and hear each other.*

As the debate at the plenary session reached fever pitch, almost every speaker was applauded by some new coalition of opinion in the audience—the hissing and shouting from the floor having subsided in response to Florence Howe's pleas for courtesy and consistency once a plan had been voted upon for recognizing speakers. Watching the scene as an outside observer (I had not been present the day before and returned Monday startled to learn what had transpired during my absence), I came to realize that while there was indeed one faction that cheered together only for speakers who advanced a single line of argument, there were also far larger numbers who were persuaded from one side to the next by successive speakers presenting opposing views, applauding both, and large groups whose applause seemed to illustrate an appreciation of some rather problematical distinctions—almost amazing under such conditions of mass involvement in political emotions, conditions I had seen many times at faculty assemblies and student-faculty rallies of the 1960s.[16]

Later, when I read the evaluation sheets filled out by conferees, I found my analysis confirmed. While there was definitely a group (faction, others would say) whose responses revealed consistency down the line in adhering to a position, many more conferees reported "plus-and-minus" reactions to the plenary session. The session itself was described as "Superb!"; "VERY WORTHWHILE"; "diversity out in the open"; "healthy"; the "open mike" policy meant "we came together Monday"; "atmosphere of supportive sharing of differences"—these reactions indicate what many participants liked *best* about the conference. Yet some of these same participants plus others (about a third of those responding to the question) said that what they liked *least* about the conference was the "separation and hostility that occurred"; "the distrust"; "the factions camping on differences rather than similarities"; "the splintering of the movement into fragments"; "San Diego"; "academic elitists"; "factionalism"; etc. The division of opinion was very real, sometimes clearly schizoid, more often reflecting honest doubt.

As Joan Wilson attempted to answer all the charges in the Resolution, there were times when the debate must have *seemed* to outsiders to degenerate into a personality clash between Wilson (and those on the conference planning committee who supported her position) and the large and vocal San Diego contingent of the "coalition group" whom Wilson was inclined to blame for fomenting the atmosphere of divisiveness.

The lack of clarity over whether the debate they were hearing was a real and important clash between valid points of view or merely an "insider's battle," a personality clash of some kind, is also an important dimension in the analysis of what happened. It was to this issue, as it is bound to affect women's studies conferences everywhere, that Rosemarie King of Berkeley subsequently addressed herself in her statement of evaluation:

> Women's studies and political struggles within the movement are not two separate phenomena, but right now there is no easy formula for creating a conference format that will allow exploration of

> our politics within women's studies because the exploration inevitably takes place at the expense of the majority of women who attend such conferences. It is my impression that a number of Sacramento planning committee members, in an effort to avoid exploitation of the conference by particular political factions, decided to try to minimize political conflict altogether — an understandable decision but obviously their efforst failed. I think it is impossible to de-politicize conferences; it may also be impossible to structure them in a way that allows for informational exchange and project development in a political context free of factional power plays. But since I don't think we should stop having conferences, I think it's necessary to continue to work for a structural model that imposes an up-front, non-jargon declaration of political assumptions and theories and how these are translated into concrete conditions that oppress women. It is necessary because the politics are there and unless the format anticipates that, it offers opportunities to political factions who will exploit any event in order to proselytize the "unenlightened."
>
> The socialist-feminists took advantage of that opportunity last week. I am not categorizing everyone who supported the criticisms as part of the organized socialist-feminist faction, but this camp did exploit a format that could not be spontaneously transformed . . . They are in a position to exploit these events because they speak on behalf of legitimately oppressed groups and against recognized evils . . . This tactic tends to identify the unstated politics with the issues, so that anyone who disagrees with the political line is on the defensive and open to charges of racism, pro-capitalism, pro-imperialism, and anti-lesbianism . . . The situation for some women was such that while they agreed with some of the criticisms, it was politics couched in platitudes, and they had to oppose the critics, if not the criticisms.

King went on to indict the San Diego women and others in strong language, accusing them of the deception and opportunism that have characterized the behavior of similar groups in the United States. "The so-called 'paranoia' about their intentions is based on factual events that have and are taking place in California, other western and mid-western states, and on the east coast. They support political confrontations when they define the ground rules and support collectivity when it is to their advantage." She herself did support the Resolution's stated desire for "creative struggle," but "I am in the other camp because I do not agree with the premise as stated by the San Diego socialist-feminists that: 'In sum, only socialism creates the necessary preconditions for women's liberation.' I vociferously refuse to fight for any *preconditions,* the very commitment to which assumes that women's liberation is a secondary struggle for the time being. . . ." (King, p. 2) But the statement about preconditions King quoted did not appear in the final version of the Resolution; what would have happened to the degree of support the Resolution obtained if it had appeared can only remain a matter for speculation.

What does become clear from a study of the evaluation sheets, however, is that conferees from many other places were supportive of the San Diego contingent's position in some ways. It is curious, however, that their enthusiasm over the open airing of opinions and their suspicion that faculty planners (elitists) were behind the "hostility," "factionalism," or "close-mindedness" clashed with a simulatneous opposition to splintering and divisiveness. A good example of the confusion was in the comment by an evaluator who wanted *"all* fields relating to the movement" to be equally represented (which sounded like support for the Resolution), who rated the conference as a whole "outstanding" (highest rating) "based on the General Session" of Monday morning—the session Joan Wilson thought disastrous, yet one scrawled in large letters at the bottom of the sheet: "JOAN WILSON IS A RIGHT ON !!" My own assessment was that most of those attending did want attention to differences as outlined in the Resolution, did want to encourage diversity, did want to admit personal biases they had learned something about while attending workshops. To this extent (and no more), they did tend to accept the "conflict" point of view. But they also wanted "consensus"—they wanted sisterhood, togetherness, feminine supportiveness, inclusiveness and warmth rather than divisiveness and hostility. Whether they were aware that these are not so easily separated, that "conflict" and "consensus" are not so easily reconciled, is by no means clear.

At the microphone and later in a "postscript" to her original statement, Joan Wilson shouldered the responsibility of trying to answer the charges in the Resolution and reassert her own position. After dealing with each of the four areas of criticism specified, she added, in language significant to my purpose of delineating the dimensions to the debate: "Generally speaking the coalition's criticism of the conference stressed the fact *that differences rather than similarities* among women must be the order of the day within both women's studies programs and nationally in the movement." Included in her assessment was an acknowledgement of mistakes by the planning group. "Beyond any doubt the conference deserved criticism": once it was discovered that so large a group of those attending were not interested in women's studies as part of the academic scene (even though the conference was announced as a women's studies conference), the planners "probably should have made drastic changes in the program on an ad hoc basis after initial registration," or else have presented a united front behind the feminist, academic program as originally planned. "Faced with a conference that was rapidly becoming politicized, the conference planners themselves split and the old New Left political scenario was played out for what must be at least the millionth time at radical political conferences in this century. In this case, however its implications are important for the women's movement at large, as well as the program at Sacramento which now appears hopelessly polarized since the end of the conference."

It was a pessimistic conclusion indeed, but it was balanced by another: the fact that during the confrontation and the planning, a great deal had been learned. For one thing, she felt the most important result was "the microcosmic view that the conference presented of the fact that collectivity, as it has been imperfectly practiced by different women's groups, *is based to a large degree on trust* while all male political systems, whether liberal, conservative or radical are based on structures which deny the existence of collective trust thereby allowing men (and now women) to carry on the business of politics with a minimum of personal interaction." That was one thing learned—the implications of the relation of feminist personal interaction and collectivity.

Wilson did not believe the coalition was truly collective. And their tactics led her to restate her original position as expressed in her speech in sharper language:

> Furthermore, the glorification of working class values (as though the values of any class deserve glorification), apparently on the assumption that oppression is basically an ennobling experience, and the in-

> sistence that class analysis can be applied to the American scene in the 1970s as Marx intended it to apply to industrialized European nations of the 19th century, is simply not adhered to today by most practicing or theoretical socialists. It is only another example of a poor attempt to emulate male politics and mouth simplistic leftist slogans in lieu of working on a truly feminist solution to the class, race and sexuality divisions among American women.[17]

The coalition members claimed to want to discuss their differences in a spirit of sisterhood, yet they greeted any opposition to their position with catcalls. "So much for this brand of 'upfront' collective politics which functioned *at best* as a personal catharsis for most of the coalition women and *at worst* as a well-disguised attempt to disrupt any serious consideration of the pros and cons of establishing feminist academic women's studies programs as the 'theoretical arm' of the women's movement." In sum, Wilson charged that the result of the coalition's challenge meant that "it looks like we are back where many of us started out—somewhere in the 1960s trying to survive the 1970s. Indeed, the political results of the conference represent *a classic case of retrogression.*" Obviously she was angry, and her anger led to, as well as derived from, a conclusion that the conference had failed. There were however, other important positive aspects, other things that were learned, and these, too, she recorded.

> The conference served, among other things, to telescope into four days political dynamics which sometimes take months and even years to work themselves out on campuses and in local communities, and which will serve as important object lessons for the rest of the decade. The conference brought a number of women into an exciting, if bewildering, political atmosphere for the first time and awakened their sensitivities on the issues of race, class and sexuality probably as nothing else had done before. Had these awakening experiences not been manipulated for covert political ends there would be no need for this postscript.

Here, it seems to me, is an important statement. There is recognition here that the "super-human" efforts she had said in her speech would be necessary to bring change, might produce results much faster than she had supposed, if the educational process that took place during the conference was proof. She also singled out a constructive exchange that took place after the morning session was over, suggested and arranged by Sally Gearhart, who had spoken for the opposition from the floor.[18] "This one session, based on a genuine effort to recognize, understand, and resolve differences instead of exacerbating or exaggerating them made the entire conference worth the enormous effort, pain, and anger . . ." Two other things I would excerpt from Wilson's Postscript as belonging under an acknowledgement of constructive results: "if the conference brought out any conclusive or definitive fact it was that we need to honor the legitimate diversity which exists among women and not arbitrary differences dictated by some never-clearly-defined party lines. It also demonstrated the deep hostility harbored by some women toward the professional skills of others, a hostility which unless ameliorated in some way will relegate the women's movement and women's studies programs to an endless series of children's crusades. Historically children's crusades seldom reach adolescence, let alone maturity." It was the same conclusion Katie Stimpson had reached the year before.

Knowing that I wanted to include her Postscript statement in this chapter, she also added, at the end: "Finally, one last word about pain and anger. This

Postscript was written in haste out of both feelings . . . in the hope that it would serve the immediate purpose of delineating the pressing problems and pressures building up within the women's movement which pose such serious problems . . . for the near future. More reasoned position papers and interpretive articles will no doubt appear some months hence. . . . Survival in the seventies still remains to be worked out. But at least the major problems and dividing lines within the movement have been clearly drawn."

There are two more documents to be entered into this case study of the confrontation in anger and in pain the women's movement is facing with itself. One is an answer to Joan Wilson's position by the conference coordinator Macie MacCormack, who found herself "unexpectedly" persuaded to the position taken by the coalition that prepared the Resolution and who feels she learned a great deal from the conference, including the fact that "I made many of the mistakes which caused great distress." Those who drew up the Resolution, MacCormack felt, had a legitimate argument. She could not agree with Wilson's characterization of it:

> If biases programmed into any behavior keep women from working together, then they need to be examined. This is not guilt-tripping. Perspectives other than academic ones cannot be defined out of the picture as non-educational or naive, or Women's Studies will be caught in the same kind of institutionalization of its blindness as exists elsewhere outside of the movement. What the conference taught us was how the isms of class, race and sex are programmed into a body of planners by its basic assumptions. . . .
>
> I spoke of wanting to mend our wounds at the conference and that is still my wish. However . . [I also wish to] affirm my support of the Resolution and the struggles before and after. .. . . Many still do not know that I, too, believe the conference should have had other priorities.
>
> How can I not believe the Resolution and its accompanying pain needed to happen? Its words and many of the thoughts that went into it pushed **me** to see the mistakes I had made in the conference planning. The many, many people who worked on the resolution trusted me unquestioningly, they treated me with kindness and love. They altered its content and form in response my arguments and explanations. . . . But perhaps most of all, the resolution was the catalyst for a breakthrough in understanding for me personally—of how I had let myself get into the position I was in as conference coordinator, one of powerlessness and exhaustion.
>
> Perhaps one of the reasons I see the way I do is that I am a sociologist. My perspective on truth tells me the individual is not solely to blame for his or her situation. Part of one's reality for which one should not feel guilty is the social existence over which the individual does not have control. Women who are poor should not be excluded by a registration fee and therefore defined out of the dialogue on Women's Studies. Women who teach in the community are as much a part of the learning scene (Academia, if you will) as the traditional university women.
>
> The question, who gets to decide? when the matter of dealing with three of the most important contemporary social realities—class, race and sexuality—are at issue is pivotal to this conflict. It did look to me, if I used the way the conference program was

> planned as my guide, that Women's Studies as defined on the Sacramento campus only intended to be part of the women's movement if it could **lead** and if it could do all the thinking and analyzing for the rest of the women.

(Perhaps it is significant—and salutary for community women—that Macie MacCormack is the new Coordinator of Continuing Education for Women at the Sacramento campus. Her views on the importance of including community women would be well represented by the essay that appears in Part II of this volume, by Maria del Drago.)

The conference had occurred at the end of the academic year, and had added to the sense of exhaustion felt by the faculty involved as they faced exams and papers and end-of-year obligations. Four days after the heated plenary session, Joan Wilson, Macie MacCormack, five others involved in the conference as planning committee members or as workshop leaders, and I, found ourselves in the same room at a smart local restaurant for the year's final meeting of the Faculty Women's Association. As we lunched (at $3.75 per plate, almost the cost of the registration fee to the conference) and made small talk over the tables with faculty colleagues who had not the slightest inkling of what had taken place the previous weekend, I was struck by the absurdity and the wonder of it all. The gap that separated most of the women in this room from those who had attended the plenary session, as all of us who had been to both must have sensed, was a different sort of gulf from the one that had divided the assembly of feminists. What were we doing here anyway? I myself had always regarded Faculty Women's Associations by and large as tea party groups whose primary purpose was socialization—as indeed it was, on this occasion as well. (Not that I opposed the sort of social rituals and courtesies that only such groups can represent; it was rather that I had given them low priority—at Wayne State as well as CSUS; until recent years, no priority.) What made the difference at this university—and I have no doubt at others across the nation where Faculty Women's groups are responding to the women's movement—was that this association saw no problem in combining its social occasions with its support of women and women's studies at the university. That achievement had been the result of a dedicated effort by a number of women on the faculty before I arrived. Chief among these was Dorothy Sexter, a professor of history active in the profession and an active feminist as well, who was concluding her two years as president of the Faculty Women's Association. Her report to the Association on the occasion of leaving office is the final document I wish to include in this survey of points of view.

Before quoting her statement, it is important to note that Sexter had also been involved in the conference as workshop facilitator; while she had not attended the heated plenary session, she had certainly heard about it and in her workshop had been disturbed by subtle signs of the rupture that was to occur. Thus Dorothy Sexter knew all about the conference that had rent the air four days before, she knew there were people of divided opinion sitting in the room, she knew that the majority of smiling women talking shop had not the slightest awareness of the strange mixture of animosity and exhiliaration the conference had left in its wake. Yet she sat at the head table and beamed upon the assembly with all the grace of a charming hostess. The primary purpose of the luncheon meeting was to honor retiring faculty women, to elect new officers, to announce such matters as my own election to the Women's Studies Board as the Association's representative (a mixed blessing, I thought, for I was now anointed to serve as official Academic Elitist—surely the most available target for criticism after the conference), and to hear the president's year-end report.

After reviewing the activities of the year, Sexter ended her report with the question, "What should be our goals for the future? What specific role can we play as faculty women, a role which is perhaps different from the one assumed by all faculty?" The answers she would have us consider represented her own opinions (she had "never expected we would all agree on everything"), and they were four in number:

> (1) to be supportive of the programs we have created for women: the Women's Advocate's office, the office of Coordinator for Continuing Education for Women, and the Women's Studies Program—*to encourage their excellence, their academic credibility, their academic extension so that their influence reaches more women on the campus and in the community* [*Emphasis added*];

What she meant by this first goal, she told me later, was that "we don't have to water things down in terms of excellence to bridge the gap between the extremes of right and left, for there are areas of interest common to all women in universities that can serve as a common meeting ground"; that was what she wanted to emphasize, and also her awareness that there were women whose work "on the fringes of the community" would make the connection with it possible, even though she did not see this as her primary job as an academic woman.

> (2) to secure equal opportunity for, and equal treatment of **all** women on campus;

The important word here, she later explained, was *all*—meaning lesbians and straight women, faculty, students and administrators, women of all classes, ethnic groups, generations, etc.

> (3) to raise the level of consciousness of the entire university community so that everyone is sensitive to the needs of women;

Here was no small task, and hardly the sort of thing Faculty Women's clubs had gone in for in the past; I looked around the room and judged there must have been present—surely for the purpose of honoring retirees—some of the well-known conservative, anti-feminist types who had opposed the "politicalization" of their social clubs in recent years, and I wondered what they thought about the first three of the "goals."

> (4) to provide positive role models for the women who are our students.

No problem here, surely. Every woman in the room must have known from personal experience how much she served these days, willy-nilly, as role model to her male *and* female students.

> And finally, I wish to say one thing more. There **are** issues that divide us. Sometimes the divisions are caused by differing ideologies, sometimes by personality conflicts, and sometimes by differing approaches to problem-solving. But we must be able to depend upon those things we have in common, on our trust in one another and on working toward our mutual goals to enable us to work together constructively.
>
> The women on this faculty are aware of the forces in modern society which tend to dehumanize institutions. Because of our

> knowledge, because of our understanding, and because of our awareness, we must stand together in love, in sisterhood, and with mutual respect to maintain a humanistic approach to education and to the university community.

Suddenly it all seemed simple. "Stand together in sisterhood" certainly sounded like a call for consensus. The very language (too Pollyanna? I wrote on my notes) was a kind that refused for an instant to concede that women's studies or the women's movement were in the throes of a "death wish struggle" or "on the verge of committing suicide," or that we had just witnessed anything like a "classic case of retrogression." It did not even seem to acknowledge that survival in the seventies would be all that difficult. When, upon the conclusion of the report, incoming president Lynn Haun thanked Sexter for the outstanding work she had done as president, Sexter received an enthusiastic standing ovation. I could only conclude that all of us standing—even those whose distance from the center of activity the weekend before now seemed a chasm away—had understood what she had said and accepted it, possibly because it was said in the kind of code language academics understand with ease. Joan Wilson, who had just written her angry postscript declaring that the conference had "substantially repudiated" the views she had offered at the conference and who had called for a *new* kind of consensus (as opposed to Sexter's "older" kind), was standing to applaud, and so was Macie MacCormack, who had supported the idea of "conflict" set forth in the Resolution. And so was I—suddenly not unhappy after all to be serving as this Association's academic-elitist representative to the Women's Studies Board. Maybe it was the luncheon sherry. Maybe reality would come intruding like a barbarian into the pleasant vision later.

Later, as things turned out, I found myself thumbing through the evaluations written by those who had attended the West Coast Conference. Among them, I found one that answered the question about "what you liked least" about the conference as follows:

> The simplistic emotional reactions: hiss for bad and yeah for good, making a dumb Western (good guys versus bad guys, good cliches, bad cliches) of part of the conference.
>
> I feel the goal of a women's studies conference was legitimate, that you can't meet all needs at one conference. We have to have enough ego to withstand the onslaughts of those who want to be angry.

Too Pollyanna? I scribbled mentally, and recalled using the same accusation only a few hours before. There suddenly seemed a possibility, the glimpse of a chance, that confrontation through anger and in pain could result indeed in a strengthening of sisterhood—not by following an Old or New Left political scenario that required us to identify ourselves according to class alone and stare across the barricades that defined "struggle," but rather in other ways, involving people of very different kinds of very different contexts who would continue to insist upon standing together, upon having enough ego to withstand onslaughts, without thereby blurring the differences. It seemed to me for that moment that the terms *consensus* and *conflict* would not be, for the women's movement, descriptions of opposing points of view, but complementary aspects of a single point of view. We would have both in the seventies, and we would survive. Somehow.

III. A SUMMING UP: POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES IN AMERICAN STUDIES

Another approach to assessing progress during the past few years, both in universities in general and American Studies in particular, is to examine, more or less impersonally, the ledger that balances positives against negatives, gains against disappointments. Despite the divisions of opinion from within and without I have just described, there is a general overall agreement that a dramatic momentum has been achieved during these crucial years which will prevent any turning back.

On the negative side, the biggest disappointment has been the failure of government investigators (of HEW, now of EEOC) to act at a rate consistent with this momentum. There have been many demands for Congressional investigation of HEW's handling of sex discrimination investigations, the earliest call for such action coming, I think, in October of 1971, when the Professional Women's Caucus Meeting in New York voted in favor of such a move. The Project on the Status and Education of Women of the American Association of Colleges reports that women's groups such as WEAL "are mounting a campaign to change a Department of Labor ruling that permits colleges to decide whether or not to make affirmative action plans public." The House of Representatives' Government Operations Committee held hearings on the subject of whether the government should require such plans to be made public on the grounds that they have not included "commercial or financial information" which would exempt them from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.[19]

The unwillingness of university administrators to take initiative in implementing affirmative action programs—indeed, the willingness of administrators to wait until they are forced to act or, worse, to confer with each other on ways to prevent taking action—has also been a negative factor that has outraged many women during the year. By all accounts, what the women have found to be most galling is the discovery that a recognizable pattern of hesitation can sometimes be found among those they expected to be most forthright and forceful. The discovery of such administrative reluctance and resistance has brought, on occasion, intense discouragement to the proliferating commissions and committees and task forces that have been formed on campuses and in the professions, discouragement that has erupted in rage expressed openly or in disgusted resignations. But once such a period of depression or of mere lethargy has passed, curiously, individuals on such committees report becoming much more optimistic when they realize the resistance *is* part of a pattern and not unique to their own situations; afterward, their groups tend to become more effective (less shy) in urging change.

The blackout and backlash phenomena should also be cited as negative facets of the overall assessment of progress. Male administrators in positions of influencing the news media have, sometimes unconsciously, enraged or insulted women by failing to give any notice to news about the work of women's commissions, by "blacking out" or giving low priority to items about the individual women who have made their feminist positions known (while sometimes giving conspicuous attention, through news of a new appointment or honor received, to women vocally unsympathetic to the women's movement), or by manipulating presentations of news to give them the preferred slant. My own feeling is that efforts at blackouts are gestures of rearguard desperation that are bound to appear comic once the news that has been suppressed becomes known, at which time the credibility of those who suppressed it is bound to be called into question. It may be a romantic notion, but I cling to the belief that there will always be a Herman Melville to rescue Billy Budd's side of the story from the keepers of the official records, who always seem to have timely reasons for defending the master-at-arms.

Evidence of male backlash, especially among young white males looking for jobs and sure that women are getting them instead, had already begun to appear on responses to the questionnaires discussed in Volume One. (To highlight the intensity of the emotion felt, I quoted a note scrawled at the top of one returned questionnaire, written by a man who said he was not hired because the department wanted to increase the number of women on its faculty and hired two single women instead. His final line was supposed to read:

> What do I tell my family when their [sic] is no work after the years of hardship? (738)

I had inserted the "sic" to make the point that a man who cannot even spell "there" correctly is certain he is jobless because women are being given special treatment; however, an alert proofreader spoiled my point in the first printing of Volume One by correcting *his* spelling without removing *my* "sic.") In her report to the Executive Board of the Organization of American Historians, Anne F. Scott, chairwoman of the OAH Committee on the Status of Women stated:

> The status of women in the profession is temporarily much improved, but evidence of the backlash has also come to our attention, much of it quite naturally originating with young men who in this tight job market feel that *they* have been discriminated against. This experience, so familiar to women scholars, comes as a shock and surprise when it is encountered by a male scholar. (Quoted in CCWHP NEWSLETTER, 3 (May 1972), 28)[20]

In sum, the negative aspects of the assessment as I view it are the failure of HEW or, so far, EEOC to live up to expectations; the reluctance of administrators to take initiative and action; the use of the "no-qualified-applicants" argument and other tactics to explain continued failure, especially in prestigious colleges, to hire and promote; the appearance of blackout tactics and male backlash.

Far more impressive to me, however, are the positive aspects of the picture, the evidence that an irreversible momentum toward change is underway. The primary conclusion of Professor Scott's report is one that agrees with this assessment: "In summary, without wanting to fall victim to undue optimism, we believe the opportunities for women scholars are improving considerably." Scott's counterpart in MLA, Carol Ohmann, also saw a change and described it well:

> As Chairman of the Modern Language Association Commission on Women, I frequently receive—not so much case histories relayed by women who have experienced discrimination, as was true a year or so ago—but news of cases set right, of terminal contracts replaced by promotion and tenure, of salary raises and retroactive salary adjustments, whether by recourse to internal grievance procedures, to class action suits on constitutional grounds, to pattern complaints under the executive orders, or to the action of state commissions or acts on human relations and rights.[21]

The statement is impressive as a summary that focuses on where and how the change has come about—the result not of eagerness on the part of departments or universities to take initiative toward remedial action but of responses to pressures exerted by the women themselves through law suits, governmental investigations, and resort to the internal grievance procedures of the university. Where the individual universities have been involved in collective bargaining elections, the cause of women's rights has sometimes been involved, but the competing organizations wishing to represent the university as bargaining agent appear to be much more vocal on behalf of women at the national level than they have been at the local level, at least during the past years. It seems likely that this pattern will change, however, especially as women at the local level discover their strength in numbers and band together, as they have at a few colleges, to threaten bloc voting in order to force NEA, AAUP or union chapters to take stronger positions than they have taken to date. It also seems likely that the coming years will see more precedent-setting law suits involving women that are supported and financed by these organizations.

"Leaps and bounds" hardly seems adequate, even as cliche, to describe the single most impressive area of progress recently, namely, the growth of women's studies. In December of 1970, the MLA Commission on Women sent out its Affirmative Action Questionnaire; in July of the following year, the ASA Commission on Women sent out our questionnaire (portions of which were modelled after MLA's); the findings were remarkably similar: "One of the most visible results of the women's movement on campuses during the past few years has been the dramatic increase in courses and academic programs for and about women. While only a few courses, scattered across the country, existed before 1968-69, by 1970 the [MLA] Commission on Women had received descriptions of approximately 110 women's courses and by the end of 1971, descriptions of approximately 650 courses and 15 academic programs, representing the course offerings on women at 197 institutions."[22] By May of 1972, Bernice Sandler had set the figure at over 700, while Carol Ohmann (who probably has the latest figures) had put the number at 850 courses in about 200 institutions of higher learning.[23] Anne Scott in her report also expressed the view that "the study of women's history is developing into a serious and highly productive scholarly field."[24]

The implications for American Studies in this growth and maturity of a new area seem to me unmistakable. While courses on the history of American women, women in American literature, American women writers, and the like, are in themselves vital to women's studies, the interdisciplinary perspective and methods of American Studies are needed and welcome at this point in the growth of a new "area study." The interdisciplinary approach may enter by way of traditional fields—and seems already to have done so to a large degree (see syllabi in Volumes I and II), or through special courses that may develop as "core" courses to majors or minors in women's studies or seminars designed to draw together the findings of separate courses. Meanwhile, those who teach core courses, seminars, honors sections and other "open" courses in American Studies as such have already turned by the dozens to American women as their topic for the term, just as those planning programs at the local and regional levels have selected themes related to American women. (A subjective impression of the listings I've scanned suggests that anything called "Images of...." is especially popular at this point.)

Let the record show, however, that the growth in women's studies, along with the consistent improvement in quality and quantity of offerings, did not just happen because of growing interest. The roles of pioneer women in the movement (Florence Howe for literature, Berenice Carroll for history, Alice Rossi for sociology, Jo-Ann Gardner for psychology and for the founding of KNOW, INC.) must be acknowledged, especially in the attention given to courses, programs, and scholarship at the time they emerged in newsletters (e.g., the CCWHP NEWSLETTER) and books, especially the FEMALE STUDIES volumes published by KNOW, INC. To date, these include FEMALE STUDIES I, II, III, IV, V and THE NEW GUIDE TO CURRENT FEMALE STUDIES, No. 1 for the MLA Commission, as well as the Part II sections of my own two volumes. (The Feminist Press at Old Westbury, Long Island, publishes FEMALE STUDIES VI and NEW GUIDE, No. 2.) The emergence of KNOW, INC. at a time when the growth of women's studies and the rise of the women's movement in America required the appearance of just such a press is a dramatic (at times, harrowing) story in itself, as I have learned since becoming one of their authors. The availability of their collections of varied, thorough, and interesting course syllabi, sponsored often by MLA but not limited to literature and approaching women's studies from different directions and with different political views as well as different styles, made it possible for teachers across the country to peruse bibliographies, bone up on parts of the history and literature they knew little about, and prepare sound courses as a result of their study of these models, when the demand for such courses emerged.

In American Studies as a field in itself, the dramatic news since 1971 was certainly the successful passage of the twenty-two Resolutions on Women presented to the American Studies Association Council during its two meetings of October, 1971, and April, 1972. That story is told in Chapter Three of this volume. On the question of whether or not resolutions are of any value in themesives, two statements by late respondents to the ASA Questionnaire deserve to be quoted. Both are by men, asked whether they would like to see ASA pass such a series of resolutions:

> Go ahead, and I'll vote for them, but I'd rather support action than more words. (805)
>
> No, because such resolutions made the problem a rhetorical one, conveniently shoved out of the way (who reads resolutions anyway?) so that an association can clean up its political/social appearance. They act like lotuses. Questionnaires are more informative, thought-provoking, and possibly helpful. (806)

The last comment, by a man whose answers on the questionnaire as a whole, as compared to the answers of others, would lead me to characterize him as decidedly conservative, was the comment I think I had looked for in vain the year before. My own doubts about the efficacy of resolutions, particularly of resolutions that manage to pass from the notes of the association's dutifully-appointed commission on women into the official record of the association without passing through the minds of anybody who would really be affected by them, led me for a long time to resist the idea of submitting resolutions at all.

The document that finally was submitted for consideration, however, was not, I think, the kind that could be conveniently shoved out of the way. It shocked a good many readers when it first appeared—even more than we thought it would. We expected the resolutions to be amended, and tried to frame them in ways that would incite discussion and reflection during the process of amendment. My own surprise over the fact that they all passed, with considerably less amending than I had expected, is exceeded only by my delight to see how rapidly they are having their effect upon the association's actions—even when, as in the QUARTERLY incident, some timely reminding has been called for. The principle of proportionate representation has been followed in the appointments of women to committees of various kinds and the elections of women as members-at-large to the council. The program planned for the 1973 National Convention, as well as the membership of the Program Planning Committee, promises to be responsive to the spirit of the resolutions. Especially impressive is the fact that *all nine members who were asked to serve* on the newly-established committee on women have accepted.[25] Whether the rest of the resolutions will prove to be empty rhetoric or needed reinforcement to the women's movement as it affects our profession will be decided by the work of these committee members and by ASA members across the country to whom they will make their appeal.

Historically speaking, I now think the fact that may come to have considerable importance to the prestige of American Studies people among professionals from other fields is the fact that the association as a whole bypassed several intermediary steps and stages in accepting the slate of resolutions in so short a time. If the letters of congratulations and acknowledgments from other associations that I have quoted in the next chapter are an indication, the American Studies Association, starting at point zero and without any reason to be more advanced in awareness of the issues than other associations, had emerged by fall of 1972 into a position of leadership among the professions within a single year. This means that a great deal of "consciousness-raising" had to be accomplished in a very short time, and the fact that it could be done and was done is surely testimony to the fact that it can be done by others. When the resolutions reached the general membership, upon being published in AMERICAN QUARTERLY, a howl of resistance was to be expected, "consciousness-raising" being a process that does not take place without emotional involvement, and the rank and file of most associations being a body politic that tends to be less receptive to change than the leadership. So far, however, the "howl" has not been loudly heard—although it may yet sound at some forthcoming convention.

Standing in the spotlight where it is being watched by others in the university community, American Studies in the United States is committed to action through these resolutions. Universities in the United States are committed to affirmative action programs by the requirements of the law. But the stance of both, one must conclude, is at this stage a confrontation with a question mark, one that challenges the future to determine whether the positive or negative aspects of the past years' story will become the dominant direction. Our posture now is similar to that described at the end of the report WOMEN AT STANFORD: RECOMMENDATIONS ON ACADEMIC AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR WOMEN, by Anne S. Miner, consultant to the president there. After pointing out that university policy as well as contractual obligations under the law commit Stanford to take action, step by step, to solve the glaring inequities exposed by reports on conditions there, Miner concludes:

> But it is possible to take action with varying degrees of vigor and at varying rates. For an institution the size of Stanford to achieve real results in a forseeable number of years, there must be leadership, a basic strategy and goal, mechanisms, and a way of reviewing progress as the task proceeds. The addition of women to academic affirmative action puts us in an entirely new situation because of the

> large numbers of people involved and because it is simply not possible to make the case that "lack of qualified candidates" is the basic cause for the patterns discovered in some areas.

Here are the three basic recognitions that have surfaced as a result of "affirmative action" investigations: (1) the recognition that the changes of achieve sexual equality will be major ones, involving a great many people; (2) the recognition that the "no-qualified-applicants" argument is a false one; and (3) the recognition that a general predisposition in favor of equality, however friendly and well-meant, is not enough. Miner continues:

> Two previous studies at Stanford suggested, albeit mildly, that perhaps all is not well with the employment of academic women. Both of these reports received sympathy and warmth but did not mobilize the leadership and vigorous action required to change the situation.
>
> The fundamental recommendation made here is that we assume the responsibility for initiating, implementing and vigorously pursuing an effort to involve more women in the academic life of the University and provide safeguards for their equitable treatment. The time is right for this action...we are ready to move decisively at this time.[26]

As the new Committee on Women of the American Studies Association assumes its task, I hope all those interested in American Studies and in the women's movement will express their support in a similar spirit, acknowledging that change that comes on cat feet is not enough, and that the time is right for initiative and vigor.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

I. "The Change Comes on Little Cat Feet"

[1] The fact is that although Minnesota was the birthplace of American Studies and continues to maintain its largest program (listing 186 doctoral dissertation topics to Pennsylvania's 110, for example, between 1964 and 1971) Pennsylvania captured much of the limelight as the center of the national movement by viture of becoming home office for the ASA as well as home of the QUARTERLY.

[2] Special thanks to Pat Melzer, Secretary to the Educational Administration Department in Wayne's College of Education, for providing information on Geraldine Rickman's present status as well as on her remarks at the Affirmative Action Conference, held in the spring of 1972.

[3] Cheryl M. Fields, "Women, Seeking Campus Rights, Hit Many Snags," CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, October 26, 1971.

[4] See AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I, p. 44, and The MLA Commission on Women, WOMEN IN 1971: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE, p. 2.

[5] Michael A. La Sorte, in a study entitled "Academic Women's Salaries: Equal Pay for Equal Work?," found that women as a group had lower salaries than men and that the difference could not be accounted for by length of service, rank or department. "Women teachers upon entering academia initially

encounter a small salary inequity which then increases in size with the acquisition of high rank, tenure, and professional experience....the most academically qualified women, those of greatest value to the institution, over time fall progressively behind in salary." THE JOURNAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION, April 1971, Vol. 42, No. 4.

The Astin and Bayer recent study indicated that sex is a better independent predictor of rank than such other factors as the number of years since completion of education, the number of years employed at the present institution, or the number of books published. Sex differentials in salary were found to be even greater than differentials in *rank*. In general, women hold lower ranks and earn lower salaries, however comparable their backgrounds, work activities, achievements and institutional work settings are to those of their male colleagues. To award women the same salary as men of similar rank and achievement, it is estimated, would require a compensatory average raise of more than $1000 (1968-69 standards). Helen S. Astin and Alan E. Bayer, "Sex Discrimination in Academe," EDUCATIONAL RECORD, Spring 1972, pp. 101-118.

The Newsletters of the Project on the Status and Education of Women of the Association of American Colleges, 1818 R Street, Washington, D.C. 20009, are excellent for supplying information of such studies as they appear.

[6] MLA Commission on Women, WOMEN IN 1971, p. 2.

[7] I am grateful to Professor Ruth Sime of the CSUS Chemistry Department for her report on views in her department that led me to construct this fictional exchange.

II. "Confrontation in Anger and in Pain"

[8] Catharine Stimpson, "A Critical View of Women's Studies," WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWSLETTER (An Educational Project of the Feminist Press) No. 2, Winter 1972, pp. 1, 4. Stimpson divides the people in women's studies into five groups or camps (as against the two I deal with in this chapter)—the "pioneers," the "ideologues" the "radicals," the "latecomers," and the "bandwagoneers."

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 4. Who "they" are in statements of this kind is a central conjecture in this chapter itself.

[10] See Barbara Burris, THE FOURTH WORLD MANIFESTO (in Part III, Chapter Four of this volume) for one example of the way the charge of being "white middle-class" is answered, and consider the comparisons to the Smith-Rosenberg essay. Also, Joreen, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," SECOND WAVE, vol. 2, no. 1 (1972), pp. 20-5, 42.

[11] Rosemarie King (1522 Henry St., Berkeley, CA 94709) who was good enough to address her evaluation to the Women's Studies Board at Sacramento that planned the conference.

[12] The significance of this conference as a case study in new aspects of the feminist movement seemed to me so great that I asked my publishers to delay this book so that I might include some of these statements as illustrations of a conflict that is likely to recur all over the nation as women's studies programs grow and seek to define their relation to the women's movement and to differing brands of feminism. I am grateful to the publisher, and to the persons whose statements I have quoted for trusting me to represent their points of view at a time when emotions over the incident are still running high.

[13] For a copy of the full address prior to its printed publication (Joan Wilson, "Women's Studies and Feminism—Survival in the Seventies," May 1973), write to the Department of History, California State University, Sacramento, CA 95819.

[14] To explain her concept of "female culture," Wilson cites a previous article of her own, "Toward a Theory of Feminist Humanism," (in mimeographed form, unpublished) pp. 5-11; Gerda Lerner, "Women's Rights and American Feminism," AMERICAN SCHOLAR, 40 (Spring 1971) p. 237; Alice S. Rossi, "Maternalism, Sexuality, and the New Feminism," in Joseph Zubin and John Money, eds., CRITICAL ISSUES IN THE 1970s: CONTEMPORARY SEXUAL BEHAVIOR (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973) pp. 145-71. She explains: "I am using the word culture here in its broadest, generic sense; that is, I am equating it with all the ways in which humans bring their consciousness to bear upon nature to create unique and diverse forms. This includes, therefore, all the 'systems of thought and technology...by...which humanity attempts to rise above and assert control, however minimally, over nature.' (See Sherry B. Ortner, 'Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?' FEMINIST STUDIES 1, no. 2 (Fall 1972) p. 10.) In this sense culture is not simply a top down or bottom up process—it is an organic totality. To date, only male interpretations of culture and male-dominated cultural forms have prevailed. This is an argument for devising and propagating a view of the future made in our best feminist image."

[15] Kirsten Amundsen, who was another of the speakers at the opening session, was particularly infuriated by this remark in the Resolution. Here is what she had actually said:

> I feel very strongly myself that the movement must hasten to make contact with the working women of America, on all levels and of all racial or ethnic backgrounds. This, perhaps, is the most pressing task at hand, for we have not succeeded well at all in bringing the message and earning the trust of women less fortunate than us—us who are of the middle-class, us who have a place in the college environment. It may take some shift in emphasis, a greater sensitivity to the harsh socio-economic realities facing these sisters, a joining together in the fight for the concrete goals of social justice—not just psychological liberation. Whatever, I am convinced that with all the energies and hopes that go into our movement daily, we shall tackle this barrier—and others—in our time! ("Women's Studies and Feminism," dittoed, p. 6.)

After the conference, Amundsen also produced a statement evaluating the conference, called "Infantile Feminism and Women's Studies: Showdown at Sacramento State," in which she declared:

> Exciting it was, yes but constructive—no. Not at least for the many women who came to Sacramento to exchange ideas and gather information to take back to their communities and colleges for women's studies,—not for the women without the prior initiation into political factionalism coming from involvements with the male Left. For I fear these left somewhat baffled, discouraged, if not shocked, at the power plays and vulgar Marxism coming to dominate the scene here.

> The socialist feminists, dominated by a group from the Women's Studies Program in San Diego, first of all rejected the very focus and format of the conference. To them a socialist revolution is the prerequisite for a feminist one, the university is an enemy and women's studies has to be moved out of academia. With such preconceptions, it stands to reason that our nuts-and-bolts approach to women's studies, our defense of diversity and our reluctance to take up futile political disputes from the old Left, all left them seething in anger. Determined to change the conference—or possibly to wreck it—they came up thirty strong on Saturday morning...

Amundsen goes to quote dialogue she heard at various workshops where the San Diego women made their charges, arguing that the statements were so ridiculous that they seem humorous in retrospect, but that the humor was missed at the conference itself.

[16] One of the enthusiastic bursts of applause (with half the auditorium standing) greeted Kirsten Amundsen's rebuttal to the Resolution on behalf of herself and Joan Wilson, one of whom was criticized for mentioning the issue of race, the other for *not* mentioning it in their opening speeches. From the standpoint of their critics, she said, it seemed, "You're damned if you do and damned if you don't." See previous footnote for Amundsen's general assessment of the motives of the critics.

[17] It is in relation to this issue that Wilson points out:

> Since at least 1966 Juliet Mitchell and other feminist socialists such as Ellen Willis and Mariasrose Dalla Costa (and cultural feminists such as Shulamith Firestone) have been pointing out that women's liberation cannot rely on standard socialist analysis of class...This is because of obvious failings in classical texts on socialism as a theoretical problem which have *yet to be overcome* and should not be confused with dealing with one's specific personal biases, attitudes toward lesbianism or taking the correct stand on political action projects. The problem remains an intellectual one which defies the anti-theory, anti-intellectual approach that is based on immediate struggle and confrontation—regardless of the inadequacy of the theory involved. [Juliet Mitchell, WOMEN'S ESTATE (Penguin Books, 1971), p. 94; Ellen Willis, "Economic Reality," p. 110] Idealizing the role of working class oppressed peoples is another long-recognized inadequacy of standard socialist writings, particularly where women are concerned because their oppression so often crosses class lines. Mitchell argued that the debate between socialist feminists and cultural feminists was 'premature' in 1966; that argument would appear to remain true today.

[18] Sally Gearhart, (Speech Communication, California State University, San Francisco) had also played a role in the workshop facilitated by Dorothy Sexter, whose remarks I shall be quoting later and who felt Gearhart's views on the very question of whether women's studies belonged in the university (even under continuing education) were represented in a paper she offered for consideration titled: A BRIEF ADVOCACY OF THE POSITION: "FEMINISM AT CSUSF SHOULD NOT TAKE THE FORM OF A DEPARTMENT, PROGRAM OR ANY STRUCTURE UNDER UNIVERSITY JURISDICTION." But Gearhart's views

were apparently not as dogmatically anti-university as the title might suggest. In a letter sent to the conference planners, she mentioned that she would be bringing a paper on the "fundamental question, 'Should feminism on college campuses take the form of departments or programs within the institution?' I have a paper advocating the negative *(though on every other day I believe the affirmative)...*" It was often on just such small things that emotional reactions to the various points of view and the persons who offered them seemed to hinge. The acknowledgement by Wilson of the fruitfulness of her exchange with a socialist and community-oriented person with a different philosophy (in contrast to the lack of "confrontation in anger and in pain" with socialist feminists from San Diego in particular) thus becomes a very significant recognition of the fruitfulness of genuine dialogue.

III. A Summing Up: Positives and Negatives in American Studies

[19] The investigations and calls for investigation of HEW may be followed in such newspapers as the New York TIMES, but the specifics cited here are from Newsletters No. 1 (November, 1971) and No. 3 (April, 1972) of the Project on the Status and Education of Women, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN COLLEGES, 1818 R Street, Washington D.C. 10009.

[20] Anne F. Scott quoted in CCWHP NEWSLETTER, Vol. III, No. 2 (May, 1972), p. 28.

[21] Ohmann in letter to Wayne State University, co-addressed to the president and the Ad Hoc Faculty Review Board, May 31, 1972, p. 2. Copy sent by her to me.

[22] MLA Commission on Women, WOMEN IN 1971, p. 4.

[23] Sandler and Ohmann in letters to Wayne State, cited in footnote 10 above and footnote 1, end of Chapter Two.

[24] Scott in CCWHP NEWSLETTER, May, 1972, p. 28.

[25] The new members are: Joanna Schneider Zangrando, National Coordinator; University of Akron; Gail Parker, President, Bennington College; Alma Payne, Director of American Studies, Bowling Green State University; Albert Stone, Council Member-at-large for Literature, Emory University; Robert Merideth, Chairman of American Studies, University of California, Davis; Lillian Schlissel, Director of American Studies, Brooklyn College; Lois Rudnick, American Studies, Brown University (the last three named were members of the Commission on the Status of Women, thus providing continuity); CC Kleinsorge, Columbia University graduate (archivist, with cooperation from Annette Baxter, Barnard College); and Delores Barracano Schmidt, Slippery Rock College (bibliographer).

[26] Both quotations are from WOMEN AT STANFORD: RECOMMENDATIONS ON ACADEMIC AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR WOMEN, by Anne S. Miner, Consultant to the President on Affirmative Action for Women. This report is part of a larger report, "Academic Employment of Women at Stanford" prepared at the request of President Richard W. Lyman.

He told me his wife went crazy.
I ask him how he did it.
—Mary Mackey
Dec. 22, 1971

CHAPTER TWO

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE: "One shock of recognition runs the circle round"

"The response was excellent, and, for some, the data were new. Some of the men complained that the questionnaire had been hard to answer; one volunteered that his wife told him he was lying."

—Letter from Patricia Kane, after the Minnesota-
Dakotas Conference, 1972.

"You may be surprised to know that I filled the questionnaire out on the day I received it. It came by sea to Australia, and of course, that's rather slow. Your deadlines have passed, but I'm sending it anyway...in token of my appreciation for the work you are doing in this important field."

—Letter from Lucy Frost, Latrobe University,
Bundoora, Victoria, Australia

"I've just sat up half the night reading your 'publication,' 'book,' whatever it should be called, and must write to say what I know so many others are saying to you: THANKS! for saying and better yet writing down/up so many of the feelings I've been having almost subcutaneously in the past few years as member of various committees on women (i.e., me), feelings I've had in head and heart and eyeball and toenail and tummy, and yet have not stopped long enough (or gone off to the woods) to write out....Get some rest—have some fun—we'll carry on."

—Letter from J.J. Wilson, Sonoma State
College, California

"We wish to extend congratulations to the American Studies Association for the comprehensive and thoughtful resolutions on women presented by the Commission on the Status of Women and published in AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES...[which] have served as excellent models to other professional organizations concerned with the status of academic women, including the Organization of American Historians. They will, no doubt, continue to serve this valuable purpose as providing a precedent for other professional organizations.

"We appreciate the leadership provided by the American Studies Association...for the entire university community."

—Letter to the American Studies Association
Council from the Coordinating Council on Women
in the Historical Profession (CCWHP), Sandi
Cooper, Co-chairwoman

"In my work as Executive Associate and Director of the Project on the Status of Women, I am in contact with a good many women in the academic world, and particularly with many who have been teaching courses in women's studies throughout the nation. (There are about 700 of these courses given this past year.) Dr. Chmaj's book...not only is often used as a text but is also considered one of the most useful books in the field, and has been used as a model for similar works on related topics.....She is easily one of the leading authorities in the field...."

—Letter from Bernice Sandler of the American
Association of Colleges, June, 1972.

"I, too, have attempted to write reports for my association and to produce useful materials. But nothing I have done has been as ambitious *and* as successful as Professor Chmaj's volume AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES. Indeed, no other association's Commission on Women has produced so complete and complex and useful a document. In part, the document's strength is a function of Professor Chmaj's extraordinary interdisciplinary training and scholarship; in part, as result of her special talents as a writer. I recommend it daily to the hundreds of faculty and administrators in touch with my office on the subjects of interdisciplinary studies and women's studies."

—Letter from Florence Howe, Vice President for
1971-72 and President-elect for 1972-73,
Modern Languages Association. May, 1972

"Although I have always considered myself liberated and lucky to be married to a thoroughly liberated man, I was really surprised at the book....I have either been naive or believing what I wanted to believe, I don't know which, but in either case, thank you."

—Letter from Nancy Zembala, Washington D.C.[1]

*** *** ***

Of course, letters of thanks and congratulations are wonderful to receive for their own sake, but there is a current running through the reactions to Volume One, reactions recorded publicly in papers (as in Dr. Kane's case), in letters written to others, in the late questionnaires sent by people who knew they would be late, [2] and in the highly personal (whether from friends or utter strangers) letters written to me. I think I first become aware of this current—an electric current, surely, along which Melville's "shock of recognition" runs the circuit round—on reading responses to the questionnaires two years ago and realizing how completely I was empathizing with respondents myself. I found again and again that I had to force myself free from subjectivity in order to report and record the results of our findings. Curiously, this propensity to empathize was true not only for cases of women with stories of mistreatment but also for many of the "Thunderers" and the "Uncle Moms" whose discomfort over the subject they were being questioned about surface in pungent excess of phrasing and highly-punctuated marginalia. My alibi for quoting as much of this material as I did in the chapter "What the Thunder Said" was that, although it represented a minority voice, the voice of indignation was more vivid than mere amiability. I am now inclined to believe that the thunder itself may represent a kind of harsh contact (negative contact) with the feminist "shock of recognition." This "shick" is related to what Gloria Steinem has called the

Feminist Realization and Joe Freeman the Conversion Experience, part of which I also discussed in my chapter "Some Room of My Own."

An identifying characteristic of the current running through the responses—whether pro or con, from men or women, from neophytes to the movement or its most sophisticated protagonists—is excess. One form of excess is the long letter, the long response. For example, one male respondent began a cover letter accompanying his questionnaire, mailed in September (the deadline was July) as follows:

> I welcome this opportunity to send you the questionnaire, however late, with some expansions of my replies. I have drawn arrows to the left of those answers which need elaboration....

Indeed he had. And his elaborations of an already-detailed questionnaire took three more single-spaced pages. Many others sent long single-spaced letters as well, and I really do not know how to do justice to these large expenditures of energy. (The content in them, for the most part, has already been covered.[3]). Nor can I possibly cope, awestruck as I am, with another manifestation of excess: overpraise for the book, especially when it comes from a Florence Howe or Bernice Sandler (quoted in the epigraphs to this chapter); God love you both, but I find it difficult to believe that in your official capacities you recommend the book to the hundreds out there *daily,* that it is in wide use as a text (Tompkins calls it a sourcebook, Schlissel a handbook—in letters quoted in footnote No. 2—but *textbook*?), or that it isn't slightly embarrassing to be described as having "extraordinary" abilities and "special talents" by one I myself regard as a role model. Such flattery includes a fervor of statement that bespeaks recognition of kinship in the pain attending The Subject, a fervor that surfaces as well in Patricia Kane's final line, in her paper to the Minnesota-Dakotas chapter: "We must make certain that never again will a book like that of Professor Chmaj be necessary."

The excess also surfaces in the use of what one feminist recently characterized as the "squishy-personal" tone of address that women today, in the name of sisterhood, tend to use in writing to one another. But it is equally evident in their heavy reliance in conversation together upon the very four- and five-letter verbs that just yesterday were regarded as unladylike, particularly upon colloquialisms for sexual intercourse. ("I've got this really fucked-up neck and back," one young student said recently, "and when I went to health service, they really screwed me on their drugs.") My own attempt to wage a campaign against the use of the verbs in such ways, on the grounds that the usage con[illegible] the sexual act to be demeaning to women, has met with only partial success. [illegible] instance, I have suggested that the appropriate reply when someone says, "Well, screw him," might be, "No, he doesn't deserve it." One woman argued that I was wrong because the sexual act was conceived as an act of violence visited upon women, and using the verbs helps to explode the myth women have been sold that it is rather "an act of love." As soon as the argument was put forth, I noted, other women in the group returned to using the language with relief, leading me to wonder whether the real reason for rejecting my argument was that the feminist movement has too great a need for the words to try to carry on without them. Indeed, the language and dress of women very often seem to possess characteristics of excess, as if the rage of women so widely acknowledged by now (see pp. 11-12 of Volume One) had been channelled into the idiosyncratic cipher language of visual and verbal appearance. I do not find nearly as much conformity this year as last, however, in the kind of excess in clothing and speech that can function to express a private rage.

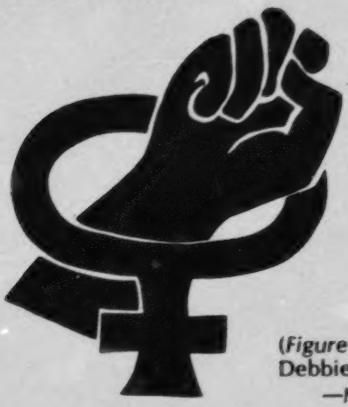
On the whole, there has been, I think, a definite change in mood during the two years since I wrote the first volume of AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES. I would delineate three stages to this change of mood. The first is the decline of thunder and rage (thunder among men, rage among women) that has come in the wake of the slow spread of the "shock of recognition" through larger and larger numbers of people, men and women alike. The second stage is the rise and spread of a genuine sisterliness among women, one whose warmth has increasingly succeeded in bringing together women who would formerly have maintained a certain distance—teachers and students, academic and non-academic women, mothers and daughters, persons of different races and classes and life styles, and even, although on rarer occasions, persons of differing political orientations. The third stage is represented in the shifting moods described on Chapter One, under the section, "Confrontation in Anger and in Pain." It is curious to see a new kind of hostility emerging *within the confines* of "sisterhood" that would seem at times to be a contradiction of the new warmth and love. At women's caucus meetings, a fierce determination to battle against sexism in the resolution of immediate issues (which will differ from campus to campus) will often set the tone for the meetings, leaving some students and faculty alike feeling intimidated but too shy to dare challenge the grim mood. At the present moment in the development of the women's movement, outside observers will quite naturally arrive at different conclusions about the dominant mood depending on whether their contact with it reflects the first, second or third stages of development. My own sense of it is that we are moving toward a fourth stage, one that cannot be achieved overnight by any means, in which the confidence established by sisterliness will allow greater toleration of differences without incurring the grimness that now seems to intimidate.

Since I myself have found all three stages of the changes in mood affecting me personally—(1) my own rage declining as I find I can make common cause with others who have experienced the "shock of recognition"; (2) my contacts with other women, personally and professionally, increasing and strengthening; and (3) my contacts with the shifting currents of emotions within the movement leading to feelings of resentment at intimidation and grimness—I doubt that I can speak with much authority about any changes in mood affecting *men*—faculty, administrators or students. My contacts with all three groups of males have tended to be positive ones, far more positive in terms of discovering their willingness to recognize and reform sexist attitudes than I had found them to be in the past. My female colleagues, however, at times report different reactions, and the institutional change that men can effect or resist would seem to suggest a less optimistic view. It may be that the decline of thunder represents a change in tactics more than a change in mood; the resistance may be less overt but still there. Nonetheless, my sense of the change is supported by evidence of the rise in *numbers* of men voting support for issues concerning women when placed in a position of being asked to do so. (The mood during the passage of the second half of the resolutions on women presented to the ASA Council, a story told in the next chapter, records the rapidity with which change in mood *can* take place—and I believe that what happened is indicative of a general trend in this direction.) Certainly, the eagerness of some male academics to allow women to appear as subjects for study on academic programs is enough to suggest that we are soon to become a "tired topic" at conferences and conventions. We are now a "fashionable" one.

Among women, the shock of recognition can produce both extreme depression and extreme rage, but once the discovery of a pattern in reaction has been made, and once women feel the support of others in sharing these feelings, the rage may be displaced by the joy of communion. (Something like this, in fact, occurred among certain participants at the West Coast Women's Studies Conference discussed in the previous chapter. Women depressed by the bickering or enraged by the evidence experienced something like a catharsis as a result of the impassioned exchange and emerged from the plenary session to embrace one another out of sheer relief and joy.) The excesses of sisterhood do indeed produce "squishy-personal" and "touchy-feely" expressions, expressions of love in forms the fastidious scholar might find appalling and the outsider amusing. But just such expressions have also, on occasion, served to prove the truth of the slogan"Sisterhood is Powerful" when the energies are mobilized toward the achievement of common goals.

Finally, I wish to register a small reservation about the clenched-fist symbol that has usually accompanied the slogan, "Sisterhood is Powerful." The symbol is still in wide use in the movement, serving to project the idea of power in sisterhood. But since the fist is essentially a stereotypic male symbol, a symbol of aggression (as in boxing or fist-fights), it would seem to be time for women to find a new symbol to dramatize the new mood of *positive* identity as sisters rather than the *negative* mood of anti-male outrage. The only step in this direction I have seen to date is a lapel button reading "WomanKIND," but I cannot quite feel that the double meaning of "kind" is adequate to the need for a slogan for the present moment in the women's movement. Perhaps someone soon will have a new idea to offer.

IS THE CLENCHED FIST....



(*Figure 1:* Silk Screen by Lee Blizman & Debbie Milinsky
—MOVING OUT,
Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 59)

...A SYMBOL OF MALE AGGRESSION?

DOES WOMEN'S LIBERATION NEED A NEW SYMBOL?

THE MAJORITY THAT REFUSES TO REMAIN A MINORITY GROUP:

A RESPONSE TO AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, BY BETTY CHMAJ

PATRICIA KANE
Associate Professor English
Macalester College

This seems the appropriate time, in a chapter dealing with responses to the issues raised in AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I, to introduce the formal paper delivered on this topic by Patricia Kane of Macalester College to the main session of the Minnesota-Dakotas ASA chapter conference, held in St. Paul in April, 1972, with a conference theme "Women in American Culture."

The picture presented [by the data in AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES] corresponds to the ones drawn by other scholarly groups: women are denied equal participation in the profession. Further—and what an indictment of American studies—women are neglected in the study of American experience and culture. After "the American Adam" has become so familiar as to be a cliché in interpreting American culture, women finally have been noticed as Americans, sometimes with an air of discovery that has an amusing aspect. And—ungrateful creatures that women are—we are now insisting that we participate in the exploration, that we help to define what our past has been and that we shape our own roles—as studiers as well as objects of study. We are not waiting docilely and passively for men to tell us again what it means to be feminine.

……………………………

[Dr. Kane then reviewed the contents of the book in its three parts, pausing to comment on the findings about women's rage, Vidal's M3 man, and the course outlines. Here she added a comment that others have also made:]

This raises the question of whether courses about women should be taught exclusively by women. It's the same question raised by courses in Black history or Afro-American literature. Chmaj does not raise the question, and includes without comment courses by men and women. The evidence of the first part of her book—there simply are not many women in higher education—suggests that there may not be enough women already on faculties to staff courses about women. The philosophical question is one on which we doubtless differ among ourselves. I say—why not? If women do not wish to be exiled to "ghetto courses," we should not claim exclusive property rights in some materials. If the courses are academically based, credentials other than sex seem central. Ultimately, however, students, not faculties, will make this decision. If women—or men—students consider men unqualified to teach about women, they simply will not register for such courses. And they won't fail to register quietly. We'll know if they object and require options on the matter.

I would insist that courses about women must have academic substance, but all do not. Those collected by Chmaj range from imaginative and soundly academic, to non-courses replete with ego trips and making of scrapbooks, to agit-prop cell meetings—from dull to dandy, with mostly fine-sounding ones between the extremes. Among the instructor directions, I found one—untypical though it is—especially appalling. It occurs in an American Studies course sub-titled Women in Literature and reads: "A....premise of the course is that, in the most advanced and exploitive imperialist economic system ever known, 'objective' literary analysis is a luxury few of us can afford. I am not interested in these books as 'artistic' expression but as political expression. Since every woman's private experience is political, we will be using these books to learn about the particular historical conditions of women's oppression, and understand our own better."

The authors to be so studied include: Austen, Bronte, Eliot, Woolf, Lessing, Petry, McCullers, Plath, Levertov, deBeauvoir (an unusual collection for an AMERICAN Studies course, I can't resist noting)—all writers whose artistic expression it seems to me might have some interest for students. Finally, the instructor concludes her description: "Journals will be used as a way of expressing our own oppression." (Chmaj, pp. 156-7) What can one say? Certainly the description is clear and no one would register for the course expecting literary study or objectivity. But my sense of the academic experience rejects the course as a proper sphere for an instructor to direct what will be felt as well as learned. Further—objectivity is not a luxury, but a stark necessity.

Now, to the major thrust of Chmaj's book, the situation of women in American Studies departments and programs, the evidence of the questionnaire, which you have in summary form.* Notice that the composite picture, drawn from several studies, and the ASA sketch are similar. The evidence is clear, but the perception sometimes myopic. Chmaj reports that some male respondents and some "Uncle Moms" insisted that they knew of no discrimination when the statistics from their schools, sometimes supplied by themselves, establish that something is amiss.

Much of past practice is now illegal. Many women have been reluctant to call for investigations because of the precarious financial state of their schools. But reluctance is not unwillingness, and if blatant injustice persists, more phone calls to HEW will be made. Already charges of sex discrimination were filed at 360 colleges during the past two years. "None of these charges has yet been refuted by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in its subsequent investigation," according to Bernice Sandler of the Association of American Colleges. (PARADE, April 16, 1972, p. 7)

It needs to be said that not every woman who isn't hired, isn't promoted, isn't paid well, is discriminated against. But the odds are that she is. The discriminatory pattern that began with scholarships to undergraduate institutions and sometimes admission quotas and continued with graduate fellowships and quotas, although recently made illegal except in private undergraduate institutions, applies to women now seeking jobs. That overt discrimination coupled with the continuing discouragement and lack of psychological support and reinforcement mean that those women who persisted through to the PhD have on the average more ability than their male colleagues on the average. They have had to. (See also Florence Howe, "A Report on Women in the Profession," CE, 32, 848; Helen Astin, THE WOMAN DOCTORATE IN AMERICA, p. 43) To say that qualified women do not exist for positions of leadership or for faculty positions is to lie. They do. They have submitted applications that were rejected or they languish in the lower ranks. Women are tired of having to be superior to get equal treatment.

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*The audience was supplied with mimeographed copies of "A Composite Portrait" (p. 38) and "The American Studies Story" (p. 56). Perhaps other chapters or universities may wish to do this; if so permission is hereby granted for such purposes—BC.

The seven-year old executive order 11246 and the later order 11375 stipulated that those with federal contracts must submit affirmative action plans. HEW monitors college compliance. At Columbia, for example, the required compliance has produced some responses that would be amusing if the human dimension could be ignored. Sidney Hook, according to a New York TIMES story (April 2, 1972), claims that they are required to hire unqualified applicants to fill quotas. Note the tacit assumption that women probably are unqualified. Elie Abel is quoted in the same story as complaining that they are being asked to conduct a nationwide search before promoting their own assistant professors. Consider the implications of that lament. "Their own" assistant professors must not be women—none or almost none. If their past practice had been less discriminatory, they wouldn't "suffer" now.

We can all supply similar responses from our own faculties. All this despite the now familiar studies: one that shows credentials with male names receive more job offers at higher salaries and ranks than the identical credentials with a woman's name; another that shows that the same article with a male name receives more favorable response than one with a woman's name (tests by Simpson and Goldberg). Remember that women who now have jobs and some record of publication have survived such conditions. Only if unqualified means being female will Columbia and other schools have to hire and promote unqualified faculty. They may be astonished at the level of performance of those "unqualified" persons thrust upon them.

But they probably won't be. The evidence shows that the women already hired receive lower salaries at all ranks and fewer promotions despite similar performance. Again we can all supply local examples. Such situations are nation-wide, illegal—and intolerable.

The situation in chairmanships is even worse. Chmaj mentions that the question on that item elicited several affirmative mentions of our own Mary Turpie but an even larger number of complaints about the absence of women as department heads. And I must add that Miss Turpie's "reward" came far later in her career than it did to the men who held the office before her.

The data on leadership positions in the ASA itself are before you. We must be some kind of model as a regional organization. But we have yet to name a woman as our representative on the Executive Council.

The situation of women faculty requires changing. Some would say that the quality of higher education will improve if women occupy more conspicuous positions because of a unique contribution women will make. Although this certainly may happen, I don't make the argument on this basis because I don't think that sex differences apply to the academic model. Women academics differ from each other as much as they do from men. For me the remedy is required in the interest of simple justice and because of our responsibility to younger women considering their careers. The model of an academic isn't male; I've never seen a statement from one of the self-annointed definers and defenders of masculinity that stresses scholarship. But an argument really doesn't need to be made. There will be more just treatment of women in academia because the law requires it.

It needs to be said at once that an ideal condition is unlikely. Even a system without sex discrimination is no guarantee of fair or just treatment. But it does mean that women and men will suffer equally the malfunction of the system. As one male respondent quoted by Chmaj (p. 80) notes, it is "hard to define justice for any group in a competitive society." We are all familiar with the non-merit considerations—graduate school ties, the impact of pleasing personalities, the friends who aid with publication, the factor of campus politics. Further, sociologists have discovered that fat people are discriminated against—and short men. All these factors, plus looking for "our sort" to join "our department" mean that according to an objective consideration of qualifications, the most deserving isn't always hired or promoted.

The notion of a strict merit system simply doesn't correspond to the experience of any of us—although we suspect our own advances stemmed from merit. The way the system operates is the reason some courses among those described in Chmaj's report and some Women's Lib groups aim at the radical revision of society. I, for one, don't want to wait until we achieve a redeemed society, nor ask my students to wait. Law and logic provide the impetus for one less injustice to continue.

Finally, what of our students—undergraduates and graduates? The present situation scarcely can encourage them. The slow down or freeze in hiring means that conditions will not alter rapidly. Tenure protects men as well as women who already have faculty positions, and vacancies are rare. This means that those departments that now are all male will continue to say implicitly to women students, we'll teach you, but don't aspire to be one of us. It means that when women receive fellowships or graduate school admissions, some men will grumble that *they* are now discriminated against. The situation will continue to offer little positive reinforcement for women who aspire to academic careers.

The Newman Report on High Education notes that the career aspirations of undergraduate women decline as they proceed through their undergraduate education. Many societal factors probably account for this. But we need to consider how much the educational process itself contributes. Three of us at Macalester have a small grant from HEW to begin such a study next fall. We hope to discover whether our women students do in fact lower their expectations as they attend college and whether a course and/or a career seminar can counter even slightly any discernible "will to failure."

Certainly during the period while higher education responds to the new government directives, an interval that may be longer than any of us, male or female, want, women faculty and administrators will need to encourage women students and remind some of our male colleagues of their responsibility to all students. The future, for present students, should be better than the past has been for us, but they must not despair while they wait for that halcyon time. They need to know that practices may not change; the difference is that now there are remedies against provable discrimination.

But when that "brave new world" arrives they also will lack one consolation we older faculty have had. If they don't get jobs or promotions in the non-discriminatory world that's forecast, they will lack the solace of blaming external forces. They really will then be equal to men, and failure will be personal. That's a risk women are prepared to take.

In the meantime, we must make certain that never again will a book like that of Professor Chmaj be necessary.

WOMEN AS SUBJECTS FOR AMERICAN STUDIES: The 1971 Minnesota-Dakotas Conference as a Case in Point

The program of this conference will serve to illustrate well how regions of the country and the chapters of the ASA have responded during the past year to the challenge of the women's movement. Both Sr. Eleanor Lincoln, chapter president at the College of St. Catherine and planner of this conference, and Dr. Kane wrote to me afterward to report that the conference was well attended, the response to the session on AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES enthusiastic. The St. Paul papers covered the event as well. I found it interesting that Pat Kane found she did not have to use the extra statistics she brought with her to answer questions, since members of the audience supplied examples of support for her (and my) arguments from experiences at their own campuses. She also reported that one issue that drew the particular wrath of some attending, and which was met with more surprise than others, was the information on the Fulbrights and other fellowships; respondents from elsewhere have also told me they did not expect to find such blatant evidence of sexism in the awarding of Guggenheims, Fulbrights, and other prestigious grants.

Women in American Culture

9:15 General Session
  WELCOME—Sr. Alberta Huber, President, College of St. Catherine
  AMERICAN HISTORY RECONSIDERED—Dr. Alan Graebner, College of St. Catherine
  AMERICAN LITERATURE RECONSIDERED—Dr. Elmer Suderman, Gustavus Adolphus College
  WOMEN IN AMERICAN POLITICS—Dr. Dorothy Dodge, Macalester College

11:15 Special-interest Discussion
  History .... led by Alan Graebner
  Literature .... led by Elmer Suderman
  Social Sciences .... led by Dorothy Dodge

1:30 General Session
  (At this point Dr. Kane delivered her address, followed by a discussion session.)

RESPONSE THROUGH INADVERTENT JUXTAPOSITION

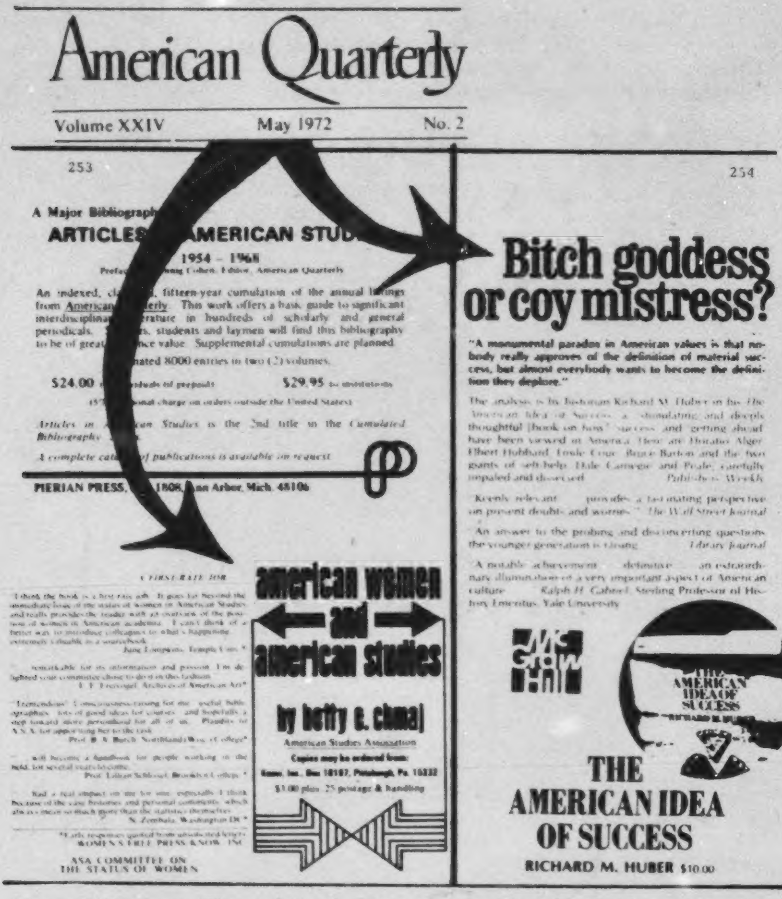
To illustrate a final kind of response, one that again reveals the conflicting currents to be found in the national climate of opinion as well as in American Studies, I need reach no further for an example than the May, 1972, issue of AMERICAN QUARTERLY, to the pages including an ad for my own book. Directly opposite the half-page ad for AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, a book which includes discussion of stereotypes of American women and which by title and intent questions attitudes toward American women in the study of America, is an ad for Richard Huber's THE AMERICAN IDEA OF

SUCCESS, headlined by the bold-lettered question, "Bitch Goddess or Coy Mistress?" (*Figure 2*) As a piece of evidence useful to illustrate how male/female stereotypes operate in American culture, the accidental juxtaposition seems too good to be true. It is amusing enough that the ad for the Huber book should offer only this choice of stereotypes to characterize "success"—both essentially *negative* images, meant to stress the seductive power, the lure of success; the obtrusiveness of the headline serves to underscore the even more farcical aspect of presumption behind the ad: the telltale presumption that the American Idea of Success has meaning only for American men (unless the ad is speaking of Lesbians, which seems unlikely). The counterpoint between the two ads struck me as so obvious that I wondered whether it might not be intentional, a delightfully sly commentary by the layout editor. I checked with Murray Murphey and learned that the editorial assistant who planned these pages, Kathleen Brucatti, was totally unaware of any such relationship, however; the juxtaposition was entirely inadvertent. Nor had anyone else to date so much as noticed it.

The fact strengthens the point I wish to make: such moments and juxtapositions occur without our awareness of the stereotypes that are operating upon us, all unbeknownst to our conscious minds. Magazines carry stories about the women's movement that run through columns flanked by ads that similarly contradict or undercut their content, yet readers do not notice. Television programs—situation comedies, newscasts, documentaries—will be interrupted by advertising exploiting appeals to stereotypes of sex roles, family relationships, female images—and viewers will not think to see the least connection.

The myopia resulting from the inability to see such relationships is essentially an innocent one, but to those aware that the inadvertence reveals a failure in vision, the innocence is bound to seem comic. It is related to the attitude Pat Kane finds in Sidney Hook and Elie Abel, whose "tacit assumptions" that academic women are less qualified, or that to obey the law and seek out women to hire must mean delaying promotion of "our own" (read "male") professors, give them away. It is related as well to the innocent largesse of the president of a woman's college who, in article printed in SATURDAY REVIEW announced that he could wish no greater destiny to American women than that they might become the mothers of peacemakers (See Eddy, in Part III, "Answers to Potter," footnote No. 6). Not peacemakers themselves, that is, but *mothers* of (male) peacemakers. Like Eleanor Roosevelt, for instance? (At that, I have heard that Adlai Stevenson, a man who looked up to Mrs. Roosevelt as a role model for himself, in the peacemaker role in the United Nations, once addressed an audience of women in much the same wise as the woman's college president, without being aware, until someone called it to his attention afterwards, that the abstract image he had of women when making the speech was contradicated by the reality of the woman he knew best, admired most, and worked with daily.)

Once one becomes aware of the contradictions that frequently occur when such statements and images are set side by side, it is hard to avoid seeing examples almost everywhere—and wondering why everyone else cannot see them too. In time, when the national consciousness has been raised to a level that will censor out such examples before they appear in print, the high comedy of contrast will probably disappear. In the meantime, such inadvertent juxtapositions serve to mirror a moment in history before old ideas have been displaced by new ones, when a snapshot image can still capture the outlines of both kinds of response existing side by side.



American Quarterly

Volume XXIV May 1972 No. 2

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Bitch goddess or coy mistress?

"A monumental paradox in American values is that nobody really approves of the definition of material success, but almost everybody wants to become the definition they deplore."

"Keenly relevant ... provides a fascinating perspective on present doubts and worries." *The Wall Street Journal*

"An answer to the probing and disconcerting questions the younger generation is raising." *Library Journal*

"A notable achievement ... definitive ... an extraordinary illumination of a very important aspect of American culture." *Ralph H. Gabriel, Sterling Professor of History Emeritus, Yale University*

THE AMERICAN IDEA OF SUCCESS

RICHARD M. HUBER $10.00

Figure 2. Response Through Inadvertent Juxtaposition (book advertisements on the last two pages of AMERICAN QUATERLY, May 1972)

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

[1] Of the letters quoted, those by Kane, Wilson, Tompkins and Zembala were written to Betty Chmaj; the cover letter by Frost accompanied her questionnaire; the letter to the ASA was sent to Daniel Aaron as president and read to the ASA Council in April, 1972; the letters from Sandler and Howe were sent on request to Wayne State University's president and Ad Hoc Faculty Review Board in May, 1972. More letters, and more complete versions of these letters, will be found in footnote No. 2, below.

[2] The following letters, included for the purpose of illustrating the points made in the chapter and not to record or represent *all* who have responded (although my gratitude for such statements, of course, extends equally to all), were either written to me directly, or to others, with carbons sent to me or their contents eventually made known to me. The context should clarify sufficiently which is which:

> I can't think of a better way to introduce some of my colleagues to what's happening. For myself, I can see that it will be extremely valuable as a sourcebook...Thank you so much for a really good, really useful piece of work.
>
> —June Tompkins, Temple University, Philadelphia
>
> P.S. I laughed and cried when I read 'miss rite to travel.'

> AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES [is] a major enterprise which has attracted national notice from scholars in several disciplines because of the comprehensive and imaginative way it treats the concerns of women in American higher education today.
>
> —Dr. Robert Sklar, Department of History,
> University of Michigan

> My guess is that the report, AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES will become a *handbook* for people working in the field, for several years to come.
>
> —Dr. Lillian Schlissel, Brooklyn College of CUNY

> AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES (1971) is a remarkable piece of writing and scholarship. Writing as Chairwoman of the American Studies Association Commission on the Status of Women, of which I was the lone male member, Professor Chmaj brought together with wit, grace, and control what could have been only widely disorganized bits of data....The resulting AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES can hardly be overpraised.
>
> —Dr. Robert Merideth, American Studies Program
> University of California, Davis

> Women's studies, and within that general category, American women's studies, is a rapidly emerging, important, and exciting field. Its concepts promise a reinterpretation of traditional reaching and scholarly materials, and the discovery and introduction of new or forgotten materials. Here again, Mrs. Chmaj, through her work on the ASA Commission and through her publication, has done original, important, and useful work. (I shall be quoting from her AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES in a speech this Saturday morning at Brown, to name just one example in support of that claim.) Perforce, and fortunately, women's studies is by its very nature an inter-disciplinary field. Mrs. Chmaj has been a groundbreaker in a new yet quite valid intellectual discipline.
>
> —Dr. Carol Ohmann, Department of English
> Wesleyan University

> Although her book AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES grew out of her duties for the American Studies Association, its contents exceed the bounds of American Studies and apply to most disciplines and educational institutions.....Mrs. Chmaj's bill of particulars as embodied in her book apply to my discipline of history, as recent actions of the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians indicate.
>
> —Arthur P. Dudden, Chairman, Department of
> History, Bryn Mawr

> In a most sensitive and scholarly way, Dr. Chmaj and her Commission have spent more than two years, including their summers, gathering the information which resulted in the book and in twenty-two resolutions concerning university and American Studies practices. These resolutions have just been endorsed by the American Studies Association and are but another example of Dr. Chmaj's genuine talent for bringing her scholarship to bear in humane ways.
>
> Committee, Community of Scholars Concerned About America
> —Nancy L. Banister, Chairwoman for the Steering

> We are particularly interested in Professor Chmaj's activities on behalf of academic women on both the local and national levels as evidenced by her book, AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES. This book has earned her the respect of university men and women across the nation including members of the Commission who are deeply concerned over the issue of discrimination on the basis of sex in academia.
>
> —Wayne State University Commission on the
> Status of Women

[3] Of twenty questionnaries that were sent in late, seven came from women, thirteen from men; four men and one woman might be said to belong to the "Thunderers" group discussed in Volume One (for instance, they "disagreed" with No. 14 and agreed with No. 30 of Postscript II of the Questionnaire), but the others went out of the way, for the most part, to indicate support. The following colleges may be added to the list represented among respondents giving permission for use of college name:

The Cooper Union (NYC)
Baruch College (CUNY)
LaTrobe University (Australia)
Bennington College (Vt.)
Mary Baldwin College (Va.)
Boston College (Mass.)
Haverford College (Pa.)
The Huntington Library (Ca.)
two retired ASA members
Miami University (Oxford, Ohio)
Dr. Martin Luther College
Fordham University (Bronx)
Kansas State University
San Diego State (Ca.)
Berea College (Ky.)
Edinboro State College (Pa.)
Librarian in Lexington, Ky.
one high school teacher

Where statistics were supplied, they confirmed the findings reported in Volume One. For instance, of the number and percentage of women among students, administration and faculty posts, about 50% of the students in classes were women, few were administrators and an even smaller percentage of women were on the faculty as one went up the professional ladder. Special cases of recently all-male schools and the like were also discussed. And then there was the high school teacher who did not complete the form but did take the trouble to send a note that read:

> "I teach in high school so most of the questions aren't applicable. (Of course I *do* have a Ph.D. and all that but it's much 'easier' to find a job in high school—or was.) Good luck!"

Needless to add, the respondent was a woman.

CHAPTER THREE

OFFICIAL RESPONSE: THE ASA RESOLUTIONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

"I can't believe we passed the whole thing."
—Famous Folk Saying of 1972.

As first chairwoman of the Commission on the Status of Women of the American Studies Association, a commission now replaced by a permanent Committee on Women, I am delighted to report that all twenty-two of the Resolutions on Women I presented on behalf of the Commission to the ASA Council meetings in October, 1971, and April, 1972, were passed. Amendments were added to only a few of them. These amendcments range from minor matters of wording to important matters of procedure affecting action at local, regional, and national levels. The resolutions as they appear in this chapter represent the final "official" version of the document to date. In a few places the language has been slightly altered in the interest of fluency, but for the most part, the original "camel" form of the resolutions remains (a camel being, the saying goes, a horse created by a committee). Thus they continue to reflect the variety of viewpoints represented by the members of the Commission and the members of the ASA Council, the final result being a position arrived at through the process of discussion, amendment, and compromise.

In light of the hestitation and animosity that greeted these resolutions when they were first presented to the ASA Council at its October, 1971, meeting, an attitude expressed by an influential but, as things turned out, small minority among the leadership, the fact that all twenty-two had been passed and were being implemented after the April, 1972, meeting is truly remarkable. For me personally, remembering the years when I was the sole woman on the national Council and recalling the scarcely-concealed amusement that first greeted my effort to call attention to the subject three years ago (amusement and, worse, still, "disappointment" to learn, so I was then told, that "someone like you" should "have got yourself involved with that sort of thing"), the evidence of a leap in perception and comprehension between October and April among ASA leaders is particularly gratifying.

The story of how the twenty-two were passed is iteslf a story of slow, dawning recognition supplanting resistance and hesitation, and, finally, of unabashed and forthright support. At the first Council meeting, the hour and a half set aside to consider the resolutions was spent in discussion of petty matters, questions of wording (questions that concealed a deeper resistance to the very idea of resolutions) and explanations of minor issues, with only one question of principle arising during the exchange, so that when the agreed-upon time had elapsed, only the first three of the resolutions had passed. Enough members of the Council voted in favor of calling an extraordinary meeting later in the day, and enough members for a quorum turned out, to allow the deliberations to continue past the point when emotional resistance might have doomed the document to languish through inaction.

But the second October session began with more resistance than the first—this time overt resistance in the form of a substitute motion calling the ASA resolutions too "legalistic" and proposing as alternate action approval of a short and mild set of statements that was presumably to be presented to the Organization of American Historians. The first real measure of favorable support for the ASA Resolutions came in the vote to defeat the substitute motion, a vote motivated, so it seemed to me, as much by a gentlemanly rejection of the implied insult to a committee of the Council simply because it happened to be composed primarly of women (it was pointed out that when other groups were asked to do particular jobs and presented their reports, it was not customary to greet the results by refusing to consider them) as by actual comparison of the OAH and ASA Resolutions, which Council members could hardly have had time to make. After defeat of the substitute motion, and after occasional filibustering and other genial delaying tactics, the quieter members around the table became sufficiently vocal in their desire to urge action that progress could be made more rapidly. In the last twenty minutes, I was asked to select the most important from the many remaining resolutions, ones that we might agree upon in the short time we had left for deliberation. I grouped three together to present the principle of proportionate representation; after these passed, I added a fourth to establish a permanent standing committee. In all, we managed miraculously to pass ten and one-half of the twenty-two—almost half—in October, as well as agree that action on the remainder would be a major priority for the April meeting.

From my point of view, the dramatic change came between October and April. The April meeting began with the reading of a letter sent to the Council by the CCWHP (see epigraphs to the preceding chapter) congratulating the Commission and the ASA for providing leadership for other professional organizations, including the Organization of American Historians (a delicious irony, in the light of male efforts to use the previous year's OAH slate of statements as a substitute roster), and for the entire university community. The letter was read by President Daniel Aaron, who was chairing his first meeting after having defeated me for the presidency during the national elections the previous December, and his gracious offer to read the letter aloud before I continued with my presentation of the remaining resolutions must have been an important factor contributing toward a predisposition of members toward the successful completion of the work before us. The rest of the way was all downhill. The most controversial of the issues had to be confronted, yet the nature and sophistication of the opposition during the April deliberations struck me as far superior (as was the nature of the support) to that presented in the uneasy atmosphere of the October occasions. It was not, finally, merely a matter of personalities present but rather the increased understanding of the issues that had made the difference.

These issues, the pages in Volume One on which they are discussed, and the points of debate that were raised during the deliberations (some of which led to amendment) will be discussed in the pages that follow in relation to the individual resolutions to which they pertain. The implications of certain resolutions for dramatic action, including mandates to regional officers to inform deans and department heads at all universities with American Studies programs, and the new structure established to carry on a variety of tasks and deal with grievances, will also be discussed in relation to the appropriate resolutions.

The preambles to Sections I and II of the collection of resolutions were accepted as satisfactory and need not be repeated here. (They were written largely by Blanche Gelfant and will be found in Chapter Six of Volume One, which chapter also includes as supporting papers some of the documents that served as models, contrasts, and supplements for us.)

I: RESOLUTIONS ON GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. ***Admissions and Counseling.*** *Women, on the undergraduate and graduate levels, should be treated equally with men in regard to recruitment and admission to American Studies programs. Men who are less qualified than women should cease to receive preferential treatment, and women should be urged to enter these programs.*

While all of the resolutions in this section are involved in the "Composite Portrait" of conditions in university included on p. 38 of Volume One, and indeed, in the whole of Chapter Two, "Universities in General," certain sections of the book speak more directly to certain issues. For instance, a "Fact Sheet" on admissions policies may be found on p. 27a, while much of Chapter One, especially pp. 1-3, is pertinent to this resolution.

An amusing quarrel arose over the use of the word "must" rather than "should" twice in the second sentence—an aberration from the policy followed throughout the rest of the document. The word "should" was accepted by us immediately as an amendment, yet when the substitute motion was advanced at the second October session, the argument was still in use that the entire document was faulty because it presumed to "dictate" with its "constant use of 'musts.' "

As of this writing, the law is still unclear on the question of whether colleges that allow quotas on admissions, especially the prestigious colleges (discussed in Chapter One of this volume), can be called to account under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act for breaking the law.

2. ***Grants and Fellowships.*** *Women should be considered equally with men for the receipt of grants and fellowships. Since the number of grants in American Studies awarded to women has been singularly low in the past, all persons in American Studies involved in decisions over grants should make extraordinary efforts to achieve equalization in this area.*

The resolution passed without amendment. It is discussed in Chapter One and on p. 57 of Volume One. Confirming data on the fact that women get less financial aid has been provided by the Educational Testing Service which compared a figure of $518 as the average financial aid award by institutions to women to a figure of $769 for men. The factor was seen as one explanation for the finding that parents of women students provide a larger share of college costs than do parents of men students (Report in AAC Project on Status and Education of Women, Newsletter No. 3, p. 1).

Confirmation of the findings on lack of fellowships to women in ASA has also appeared since the publication of my book, a study of the major foundations and fellowship programs showing that few women hold important positions in foundations or win prestigious fellowships, according to a report from the Women's Equity Action League reported on October 26, 1971. Less that 10% of the White House Fellows and Fulbright Fellowship award winners have been women, WEAL reports, while the Ford, Carnegie, and Rockfeller foundations have awarded women's projects an "infinitesimal total dollar amount."

In her report to me on response to her presentation at the Minnesota-Dakotas chapter, Patricia Kane wrote: "The data on fellowships caused the largest gasps, in part, I think, because they were unfamiliar. We knew women rarely got them, but we hadn't known how rarely." True enough—and the full report on Guggenheim grants is not yet in.

3. ***Hiring.*** *We endorse the principle of equal consideration in hiring.*
   a. *Dossiers of applicants for positions should be treated equally, without regard to sex, marital status, or children.*
   b. *Whenever the credentials of a woman match or exceed those of a male competitor, the woman should be given the offer. This policy should remain in effect until the ratio of women on the faculty approximates the ratio of women students in programs with terminal degrees. In the future the ratio of women on the faculty should approximate the ratio of women in programs with terminal degrees.*
   c. *ASA programs in the United States and abroad should actively seek out qualified women by stating their policies in their recruiting activities. Since the failure to post and publicize job openings represents a subtle form of discrimination against women, every effort should be made to circulate information about openings as widely as possible so that available women have the opportunity to apply and be seriously considered. Women in the ASA Women's Directory (see Resolution 16) should be notified of position openings for which they are qualified.*

Part (a) is discussed in Chapter One, part (b) in Chapter Two of Volume One. Part (b) obviously was the controversial section of this resolution, and was the one part that was discussed on the basis of principle at the first October meeting. It was debated in terms of the desirability of preferential treatment, voted upon, and passed by a margin of six votes.

4. ***Part-time Employment.*** *Since prejudices against part-time employment make it difficult for women to fill roles demanded by society and by their professions; and since men who wish to fulfill both professional and family roles are prevented from doing so by rigid practices demanding a full-time devotion to profession and the relegation of family duties to their wives; and since the current status of American Studies programs on many campuses is such that only part-time positions are available;*
   a. *we endorse the principle that part-time service should count toward tenure and promotion, and that appointees be granted all fringe benefits;*
   b. *we encourage American Studies programs to make use of part-time personnel in all roles—teaching at all levels, chairpersonships, decision-making roles—and not to discriminate in the assignment of duties, facilities, or monies to part-time employees.*

The issues in this resolution have divided opinion in the university community, and opposition was varied at the ASA Council meeting in April, when this controversial resolution came up for consideration. After debate, the resolution passed in its original form, only one Council member dissenting. The argument offered both by me and by others on Council was that American Studies as a profession ought to take leadership in promoting a principle that encourages "our own" people, people with American Studies degrees, to be placed in jobs that required the expertise of American Studies even when, as is usual, the only opening for such jobs may be a part-time slot. I make this case and report reactions on the issue of part-time employment in Chapter Two, on p. 34 (the Harvard Report, which takes a similar stand), p. 45, and especially p. 102 of Volume One.

5. ***Salaries and Promotions.*** *We subscribe to the principle of equal pay for equal work.*
   a. *This applies to part-time as well as full-time work. Women in part-time positions should be paid on a proportionate scale to full-time faculty.*
   b. *Women should be promoted on an equal basis with men. Women should be represented proportionately with men on promotions committees.*
   c. *We urge all universities to make a special effort to hire women as associate and full professors and as administrators, for current studies reveal the greatest discrimination against women at these levels. We endorse the immediate goal of increasing the proportion of women* ***at all ranks*** *to that of women students enrolled in departments or programs, and the long range goal of increasing the proportion of women at all ranks to 50% on a national basis*

It was on this resolution that the October opposition reached a point of intensity that finally spilled over into absurdity. There was no difficulty in accepting the principle of equal pay for equal work, and the only changes made in wording were the substitution of "proportionately with men" for "equally with men" in (b) and the addition of the phrase "on a national basis" at the end of (c). But the suggestion was made that the word "qualified" be inserted prior to the word "woman" wherever it appeared, a suggestion that seemed to be taken seriously long enough to cause some to make a solemn case of opposition. When I suggested that the commission members would accept even so outrageous a suggestion if the word "qualified" were also introduced before the word "man" every time it appeared, the argument seemed to fall of its own weight, even though it is unlikely that Council members were aware of statistics showing women to be more qualified than men. That the argument was offered at all revealed the pervasiveness of the belief that if women have lower rank and salary, it must be because they really are less qualified. (Earlier, I had been asked whether I meant that if four people applied for two jobs and the two best qualified turned out to be husband and wife, I would think it fair to allow one couple to have a double income while the other had none. "Yes, that's what she means," a fellow Councilman announced—and I had to resist explaining that if the proferred case was supposed to represent reality, then the likelihood was that both families *would* have single incomes...the *wives'*.)

Part (a) of the resolution has support from materials on pp. 35-37, (b) and (c) from Chapters One and Two (the charts in particular), while the studies showing women to be already more qualified are referred to on pp. 27-28 and p. 118, Volume One.

6. **Application Blanks.** *We wish to call to the attention of all persons involved in decisions on admissions, grants, and hiring that recent studies have shown that even a mere reference to sex is sufficient to lead to discrimination. As long as the goal is to equalize men and women as students and faculty in a department or program, the sex of the applicant will have to be known. But once equalization is achieved, we urge that, in general procedure, all applications and letters of recommendation be worded to avoid all reference to the sex of the applicant.*

The most famous of the "recent studies" mentioned are the tests by Simpson and Goldberg on the "John T. McKay" and "Joan T. McKay" articles, in which a piece of writing with the male name received more approval than the identical article with a female name as author. Reference to this study and Linda Fidell's are on p. 73, Volume One.

At the ASA Council meeting, we stopped long enough to explain and cite cases in point where application blanks were deficient, but there was little opposition offered to this resolution and it passed as presented.

7. **Power Position.** *Women should be represented proportionately to their numbers in the profession in departments, on committees, and in significant policy-making administrative positions in their universities.*

The phrase "proportionately to their numbers" was substituted for "on an equal basis with men," establishing by now a strong preference for the principle of proportionate representation as the ruling guideline.

8. **Independent Status.** *Women should be treated on a completely individual basis in all professional matters of interest; consideration of marital status, of husband's professional position or salary; or of other family obligations should be held irrelevant in hiring, promotion, or salary.*
   a. *This implies abolition of written and unwritten anti-nepotism policies, in order to make it possible that husbands and wives be employed at the same institution.*
   b. *It also implies abolition of questions about marriage, divorce, separation, children, and spouse's name or occupation from application blanks.*

Of the several issues this resolution raised, the nepotism issue was the one the Council debated, primarily in terms of whether the resolution should specify the conditions under which husbands and wives should be allowed in the same department. After debate, the resolution passed in original form. The issues it raises are discussed on pp. 45-46 of Volume One.

9. **Pregnancy and Parental Leaves.** *Pregnancy and parental leaves should be accorded to faculty as a matter of course. Policies should be established to allow academic careers to be compatible with parenthood in ways that allow men to share in child care. Women should not be penalized professionally for getting married or having children.*
   a. *The pregnancy leave should be viewed by colleagues as ordinary medical leave with pay (or without pay), the duration and conditions of which to be at the discretion of the woman, or of the woman in consultation with her physician as specified in the HEW guidelines to*

employment conditions for women. Pregnancy leave should not adversely affect her consideration for tenure.

b. *A term's leave for child care should be granted on request and without salary to either parent. Adoption leave may be viewed as parental leave.*

There was strong and, I think, unbiased expression of support and interest in this resolution. After lengthy discussion, the changes proposed boiled down to adding the phrase "(or without pay)" in (a) and the sentence on adoption leaves at the end. Reports of a year later support the reading that while interest is high, and outrage at past practices for maternity leaves can be volatile, there are changes being made in university policy at many universities to eradicate past injustices. Discussed on pp. 7, 21, 46, 101 (No. 26, cf. No. 43), 103 (No. 31).

10. Day Care Centers. *We urge the establishment of day care centers as a joint responsibility of the university and the community. Since women have traditionally been confined to the home to care for children while men pursued their careers, and since women too must have opportunity for intellectual and career pursuits, a substitute child care service, of a competent and creative nature, staffed by both men and women, should be available to provide them this opportunity.*

The original resolution had called centers a "mandatory" step, the fierceness of the single word deflecting attention, unfortunately, from the question of the kind of centers to be favored. The Australian respondent to the questionnaire reported conditions there to be far superior to many American universities—maternity leave with pay and consideration, no nepotism prohibition (she and husband in same department at same salary scale), and good day care facilities:

> "I pay $12.50 a week to send a four-year-old to a very good child care center which is open from 7 a.m. - 6 p.m., provides activities, a hot lunch, and very good care. For an under-three, I pay $15.00 a week—includes diaper service, feeding, etc. University is building its own child care center next year for the children of faculty, staff, and students. University-owned child-centers are common in Australia, and it seems an idea worth looking into for American universities. The centers have to be run by a trained nurse (RN) and under-3's must be cared for by Mothercraft Nurses." (92)

11. *H.E.W. INVESTIGATIONS.* *The American Studies Association should welcome the investigations by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare of individual universities and other federal contractors in order to enforce compliance with Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 pertaining to discrimination by sex. The ASA acknowledges the H.E.W. guidelines as binding on itself.*

In October, 1971, this resolution and that part of it reinforced in Resolution No. 18 were regarded as controversial; by April, they seemed less so. A year later, with disappointment in HEW's actions in the past leading to a strengthening of HEW Guidelines, and a transfer of effort to the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) the original ASA statements look mild indeed—little more than pledges to obey the law. But the change anticipated from government pressure on universities *is* coming; more and more campuses have "Affirmative Action Committees" rather than Commissions on the Status of Women (dramatizing subtly the change from a stance of *inquiring* about status to *insisting* on compliance with Affirmative Action Guidelines), while more and more administrations are setting forth Affirmative Action Plans. In October, 1971, the term "affirmative action" still sounded strange, redundant (what other kind of action?), a cliche in the making. A year later, one hardly heard the strangeness any longer, so frequent was the usage. If, as I wrote in the opening sentence to Volume One, every great social movement makes its own contributions to language, the term "affirmative action," deriving from the laws that led to the HEW and EEOC investigations, might well be named, for the women's movement in 1972-73, Cliche of the Year.

Discussion in Volume One appears on p. vii, p. 6, and especially p. 31, plus pp. 46-47, 79-80 (No. 3), and 113 (MLA). Amended to shorten only.

II: RESOLUTIONS SPECIFICALLY AFFECTING AMERICAN STUDIES

12. ***Representation.*** *Since women have been conspicuously underrepresented in chapter offices and on the ASA Executive Council, the American Studies Association hereby resolves:*

- *a. that the individual chapters be informed of these resolutions by the office of the Executive Secretary, be apprised of the underrepresentation, and urged to seek out qualified women to serve in chapter offices; and*
- *b. that the ASA Constitution be amended to increase the representation of women to approximate the percentage of women in the organization.*

It was known in advance that this resolution would likely cause the most controversy, an alternate plan proposing that half of the members of the Council be women having been proposed by Commissioner Merideth as a substitute motion. After the substitute motion was discussed and defeated, an amendment to the main motion was offered in Merideth's name to part (c) of this resolution, which called for three women to be elected as members-at-large in 1972, two in 1973, and one in 1974—at which time presumably all remaining evidence of discriminatory practices would have disappeared, so that a special election would no longer be necessary. Merideth's amendment proposed that if by this time equalization had not occurred, the principle of requiring 50% female representation *then* be instituted, the failure of the alternate policy of "good will rather than force" having been proven. The motion to amend failed for lack of a second, but the tactics did serve to alert Council members to the fears and hopes that complicated the Commission's choice of guidelines for determining how to resolve the inequities in Council representation.

The obvious solution was to eliminate part (c) as such. It had been our hope that dividing the resolution into three parts—(a) and (b) with (c) detailing procedure for implementing (b)—would provide the proponents of proportionate representation with a fall-back position of just this kind. It meant we *had* amended the Constitution by passing 12 (b) but had left to the Executive Secretary the job of determining each year, from the percentage of women in the association membership as compared to the percentage elected to Council through normal election procedures, how many women were to be elected as members-at-large. It was a stronger resolution than was the original that included part (c), since it placed no limit on the numbers of women to be elected or the length of time the guideline was to remain in effect. As a technique for amending the constitutions of professional associations, I recommend it as a model, possibly by specifying more clearly the language to be added to the appropriate Constitutional Article, e.g., "There shall also be as many women elected as members-at-large as will increase the representation of women on Council to approximate the percentage of women who are members of the association [or profession]."

The implementation of this resolution began immediately. By fall of 1972, Allen F. Davis, who had been elected new ASA Executive Secretary at the April meeting, determined that three women had to be elected as members-at-large. Since it was our first election and an "off-year" between conventions, he sought the suggestions of the members of both the former Commission on Women and the new Committee on Women (see Resolution No. 18) for the names of six women, representing various regions and ages (i.e., including both younger women with strong interests in the women's movement and women whose service had gone unrecognized for far too long), to be placed on the mail ballot for the late fall elections.

13. ***Decision Making.*** *The ASA Council and Executive Committee should be instructed to take the appropriate steps to have women represented on the editorial board of the AMERICAN QUARTERLY and the major committees of the organization in approximate proportion to the number of women in the association.*
14. ***National American Studies Faculty.*** *The ASA should instruct the Director of the newly established National American Studies Faculty to take full advantage of the available energies, experience, interests, and abilities of the women in the profession, and to use as a guideline for participation in all activities of the National Faculty a ratio of women proportionate to the number in the association.*
15. ***Conference and Conventions.*** *The ASA should aim toward having women represented at all sections of conferences in which ASA participates. At the biennial National Convention of the association women should be represented as speakers, chairpeople, panelists, and the like, in approximate proportion to the number of women in the association.*

As I pointed out in the opening chapter, while discussing the incident regarding the AMERICAN QUARTERLY editorial board, the above three resolutions were grouped together and presented at the second October meeting as ways to implement the principle of proportionate representation in association activities, and they passed with little discussion or opposition. (Statistics in Volume One on p. 56 are pertinent.)

Since the National American Studies Faculty has since become a major enterprise of the association, the question of involvement of women not only as participants in Faculty activities and on the governing board but also in the kinds of projects selected by NASF for consideration (e.g., women's studies in the high schools and community colleges) promises to become an important one. During NASF's first year, Nancy Banister's role in designing and directing the "Kirkland project" of the Community Scholars Concerned about America (formerly the ASA Radical Caucus), a highly successful project supported by the

NASF, was conspicuous. I was appointed to the first NASF governing board, along with Charles Peavy of Texas and Eugene Leach of Yale, to serve with the members of the ASA Executive Committee in determining the policies and major projects to be carried out by the NASF in the future; Paula Eldot was appointed to the second.

On the planning committee for the Fourth Annual American Studies Convention to be held in San Francisco in fall of 1973, women were *more* than twenty percent of the members (four out of fifteen, including Alice Harris, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Lillian Schlissel and myself), and a deliberate effort to include women among speakers and other participants was made. Not surprisingly, women also were one of the major topics for discussion at the convention, both in the central theme of a cluster of sessions chaired by Rosenberg, called "Studies in ♀ / ♂ Sex and Conflict," and in many other individual sessions on a wide variety of topics.

16. **Directory.** *The ASA should initiate and maintain a list of women resource persons in the profession, at all levels, in a Women's Directory compiled by the office of the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Committee on the Status of Women. The purpose of this directory would be to facilitate recruitment and participation of women in the various functions in the profession (special lectures, panels, editorships, directorships), to increase the visibility of women, and to provide assistance to those on search committees seeking qualified persons.*

The idea for a directory came from the American Historical Association (see p. 112 of Volume One), but as yet no word has reached me on whether such directories serve effectively as job clearing-houses as well as general lists, or whether they are likely to be widely used. In the light of the falsity of the "no-qualified-applicants" argument and the widespread ignorance about the numbers and names of women available to participate in *many* functions in the profession (not only those dealing with the *subject* of women), the possibilities for an effective directory appear to be great.

Lois Rudnick has been asked to serve as the Directory's first coordinator, and she requests that all women who wish to be listed in it as resource persons to be called upon for lectures, panels, editorships, directorships, and the like, or whose names may be submitted to search committees seeking qualified persons, send their vitae to her at 3 Haven Road, Medfield, Massachusetts 02052. This is the address as well to which those interested in locating women for their particular purposes should also write.

17. **Program Survey.** *We urge the ASA to direct that the section of the national program survey designed to deal with the status of women be prepared with careful attention to the problems involved in such an interdisciplinary study, that it be done in consultation with the Committee on Women, and that it be adequately funded.*

Charles Bassett of Colby College, who is doing the survey, has not yet reported on it, but his plans include the intent to live up to the spirit of this resolution.

18. **Committee.** *A Committee on the Status of Women should be made a standing committee of the ASA until such time as there is no longer a need for its services. This committee should be charged with the task of con-*

tinuing to press for a proportionate ratio of representation of women in all areas pertinent to American Studies. This Committee should be empowered to receive confidential information from women who have suffered discrimination and to file complaints under the Federal Order provided for this purpose. This Committee should be mandated to press for the realization and implementation of the resolutions listed in Part I—on admissions, salary, hiring, promotions, and the like. This Committee should also be free to undertake special projects relevant to the subject, such as studies of textbooks and reading lists in American Studies courses to determine whether and where misrepresentation and underrepresentation of women exists.

With the passage of this resolution, the Commission on Women that produced the resolutions was officially dissolved and replaced by a Committee on Women, which will serve both to guide association policy and to carry out specific tasks. The names of its nine members were listed in footnote No. 25 to Chapter One. The pressing issue at present, at least so it appears to me, is the question of procedures for dealing with grievances and filing them with HEW and EEOC. Lillian Schlissel has proposed a nation-wide committee, with individual women who have cases to discuss encouraged to contact any member of it. I have proposed that the Committee as a whole constitute itself as such a grievance panel, but I have not yet heard whether such a policy has been accepted. The delay provides little comfort for individuals caught in situations they believe may be instances of discrimination—against women or against American Studies (an ambiguity I shall discuss in relation to my own case against Wayne State University)—but at least the machinery is provided by this resolution for potentially effective action once grievance policy is announced.

19. ***Bibliography.*** *The topic "WOMEN" should be added to the present annual bibliography published in AMERICAN QUARTERLY's second summer issue, so that it will be of maximum usefulness to those presently teaching and/or planning to teach courses on the American woman, and to scholars doing research on the subject.*

The resolution passed as stated, and Dolores Barracano Schmidt was contacted to provide the ASA Bibliographer with material for such a section. However, in the August issue of the QUARTERLY, editor Murphey announced a change in the journal's policy for its summer issue, replacing the Annual Review of Books and the commentaries on Articles in American Studies with essay reviews "each covering a significant field within American Studies and written by a scholar of eminence within that field." The editorial statement did not say who will determine which fields are "significant" and who will write the essays. This unilateral decision is sure to cause considerable debate in association councils, quite apart from the issue of women, but the question of whether and how to proceed with Bibliography on Women for scholars in American Studies and other interdisciplinary and cross-cultural areas remains unresolved. Since bibliography is urgently needed at this time, and since Professor Schmidt is also active in MLA activities at the national level, it may be that scholars can use MLA facilities instead—or that separate (and separately funded) bibliography can be compiled by her for mailing to QUARTERLY users.

20. ***Present Courses.*** *The ASA should encourage expanding course materials in present American Studies courses to include units and projects on the*

American woman, and should encourage both men and women students to focus upon the topic of women in American life through dissertations, theses, and seminars.

21. **New Courses.** *The ASA should encourage the addition of courses in Women's Studies where they do not now exist, and should endorse the principle that Women's Studies be part of American Studies just as Black Studies, Urban Studies, and Ethnic Studies may be covered by the umbrellas of American Studies, i.e., without thereby insisting that only the American dimension of the subject is pertinent.*

The two resolutions on existing courses and new courses are self-explanatory, the principle accepted during the discussion of the ASA Council in April that not "either-or" but "both-and" should determine where to put the emphasis as between the two directions. Both are discussed as they affect American Studies in Volume One, pp. 64-71; the course outlines in Part II of both volumes are illustrative.

In the September, 1972, AAUP BULLETIN, Ruth Crego Benson, who taught as part of a team in a multidisciplinary course called "The Social Roles of Women in American Society" at Wesleyan University as part of the American Studies program, concludes from her analysis of the theory and practice of Women's Studies that "the single most important thing about women's studies [is that] it changes the lives of men and women." This is true not only because such courses are so personal to students, touching their closest concerns about themselves, but also because they widen beyond specific subjects and issues:

> Courses in women's studies...inevitably lead to the expanded study of related social and cultural phenomena. For example, we often question the values and priorities that have shaped scholarly research. What does it say about our own society, for example, that historians have chosen to record the large and small events of diplomatic history—with which very few of us are directly involved—while they have paid little attention to the history of the family, with which all of us are involved...? Another example: we are constantly told that the home is important, and that what women do in it is supremely important. Yet, until now, there has been no history of domesticity Carl Degler, the American historian, is giving us one.
>
> ....
>
> Women's studies courses are very often multi-disciplinary. They must draw on many different fields, different cultures, and many historical periods in order to make sense. For example, it's impossible to understand the economic exploitation of woman unless we have also studies how she has been defined biologically and medically, how her nature has been described by religion or psychology,. and how her life has changed with the advent of new economic patterns and a new technology.

So far, Benson's arguments will sound familiar to those who are well aware of the special relation between women's studies and American Studies. In one of her examples, however, she suggests a direction into the future that goes beyond either of the two ASA resolutions cited above—namely, toward the creation of new courses that are *not* women's studies courses, that are inspired by and outgrowths of the courses now offered as women's studies but go beyond the normal boundaries of such courses.

> A new course being given at Cornell this year, called Domination and Subordination, goes beyond the normal boundaries of women's studies courses. One of its teachers is a woman who teaches women's studies, and it includes much material on the condition of women—as is appropriate to the topic. But the material on women is integrated into the course as only one model of all kinds of domination and subordination patterns: female/male, homosexual/heterosexual, worker/employer, governed/governor, colonized/colonizer. These examples illustrate that courses in women's studies go very wide and very deep in examining a society that has traditionally preferred the male to the female, the individual to the community, exploitation to cooperation, and domination to coexistence. —Benson, "Women's Studies: Theory and Practice," AAUP BULLETIN, Vol. 58, No. 3 (September, 1972), pp. 283-286.

22. ***Final Resolution: Implementation.*** *To implement these resolutions, (1) officers of regional associations are hereby asked to send mailings to inform department chairpersons and deans, whether they are members of ASA or not, of universities likely to be affected, that these 21 resolutions have been passed; and (2) national ASA officers are instructed to inform the entire ASA membership of their content, publish them in the AMERICAN QUARTERLY and AMERICAN STUDIES: AN INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER, along with such explanation as seems necessary.*

Realizing that words without deeds, resolutions without implementation, are not enough, the Council accepted the spirit of the final resolution but amended and refined it so that regional chapters and national officers share the responsibility for the first step toward implementation: educating those who need to know, informing them that action has been taken in American Studies at the national level.

The most important part of the amended version of this resolution is its mandate to regional officers, in part (1), to send mailings announcing national action to deans and chairmen at constituent colleges—i.e., wherever members of the association may be located, as teachers, students or in other classifications. It is a large responsibility, and I envision during the coming years, all across the country, cover letters being composed and read to sympathetic colleagues for approval and amendment, perhaps submitted to regional meetings for consideration. The risk involved in giving this mandate to regional officers is that it could place the destinies of women in American Studies, so it has been argued, in the hands of people "whose consciousnesses are not yet raised" and whose handling of the matter might be not only inept but unsympathetic. I myself believe American Studies must take this risk, and that it is time for action at the regional level; should regional officers fail to act effectively, the women in the regions must accept the responsibility of asking what action has been taken and how, and of establishing regional committees or other approaches as necessary.

As resolved in part (2), the national officers did arrange to have the resolutions published in the AMERICAN QUARTERLY; I do not know when they are to appear in the international newsletter, nor have I been informed of any plans whatever to add "such explanation as seems necessary."

As a final note, related to this last point, I would call attention to the comic precariousness of the choice among three guidelines that affected the phrasing of the resolutions, from the original drafts to the final job of "polishing up the wording for the sake of fluency." I would state these guidelines as: (1) trusting the good will of Council members and officers (and getting it simply by taking the stance of expecting it), (2) not trusting to good will but spelling every step out in detail, so that the intent of the resolution could not be undermined through the inattention or opposition of one or a few people, and (3) encouraging good will and genuinely expecting it—but maintaining a fall-back position just in case.

What happened to the wording of the final resolution is a case in point. *The original resolution ended with the phrase, "along with such explanation of* their content as is deemed necessary and desirable by the *Council*." Since this was the last resolution, passed at the end of a long meeting at a time when the April spirit had supplanted the October resistance, belief in good will seemed very much in order. When "polishing up" for publication, I sent to the national office a memo that changed the phrase to: "such explanation of their content as the Council deems necessary," but I hand-bracketed "the Council" and wrote in "seems?" as an alternate to "deems"—a tentative enough questioning, offered because I knew of President Aaron's earnest desire to see the whole document shortened, and because I envisioned the problem of having to call a Council meeting to determine what "explanation" was necessary before any action could be taken. Today, months later, the thought crosses my mind that I may be held responsible if *no* "explanation" appears, or if it is written by someone who does not speak for the Council or was not part of the deliberations.

Nonsense, I tell myself. To offer at this point no explanation or inadequate explanation, much less unsympathetic explanation, would be to insult every one of the duly-elected members of the Council; if only out of self-interest, "they" would not do such a thing.

But then again, "they" might. There is such a thing as inertia.

When comes The Guideline to palliate personal doubt and bureaucratic sluggishness, to imbue us all with confidence and to banish forever creeping paranoia?

CHAPTER FOUR

MORE ROOM OF MY OWN: "Happiness is suing your own university"

Betty E. Chmaj

"How I learned to stop being grateful and stand up for my rights"
—Title of an article by Alix Nelson in MS. Magazine, June, 1973.

"Happiness is becoming president of your own university."
—George E. Gullen, Jr. on being named, unexpectedly, President of Wayne State University, Detroit, 1972.

"Women must not be afraid to sue...Litigation through our courts is a fundamental aspect of our democracy, based on our Bill of Rights."
—Walter Karabian, California Assemblyman, speaking on the ERA to a Conference on Women in Education, Sacramento, April, 1973.

"They don't seem to have any rules in particular, and you have no idea how confusing it is."
—Alice in Wonderland.

In Volume One of AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, I had included a chapter called "Some Room of My Own," into which I had shunted analysis and comments that I felt were of too personal a nature to be included in the preceding chapters of Part I. I thought it turned out to be a rather awkward chapter, not quite daring to be direct and personal, reflecting in its awkwardness my own state of conflict and "between-countries" indecision. But over the year, this chapter elicited more favorable comment than any other. Apparently, it struck a sensitive nerve for women going through similiar struggles, personally and professionally, so that when the present volume was first conceived, the suggestion for a similar personal chapter was promptly put forth. That was the time I first considered the possiblity of using the contours of my own court case and the history leading up to it in order to make a statement of relevance to many of the issues covered in both books. I had deliberately declined to mention the then forthcoming case in the first volume, for I felt to do so might influence the responses of readers (if only unconsciously) to the findings of the ASA questionnaire, possibly even to the resolutions submitted by the ASA Commission on Women, which I then chaired and which officially authored the first half of that book. In some advance publicity for this book, a chapter on the case was promised. Being bound by agreement to confidentiality about what transpired during the hearings, I still cannot share full details.

What I can do, however, is trace the events leading up to the case and share my own perceptions and assessments as they arose at several crucial moments during this history. In this account, readers will find, especially as they read between the lines, two patterns of recognition illustrated by my case. One is the recognition that attitudes toward sex are more deeply involved in decisions affecting universities and faculty careers than anyone supposed, a discovery others have noted too. The other pattern, more complex, seems to be a discovery destined for the near future—the recognition of *interaction* between (1) the concerns of women and (2) the concerns of students, especially graduate students; (3) the concerns of interdisciplinary, as opposed to traditional, scholars and teachers; and/or (4) the concerns of all who seek new forms for the production and expression of scholarship other than, e.g., the full-time tenured teaching post or the monograph printed in a professional quarterly. As we shall see, these issues become the four counts involved in my case.

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In December of 1971, I filed suit in Federal District Court against Wayne State University, after having informed the dean and associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts as early as the previous October 5th of my intention to do so. What the case was about and why I sued are facts that should be saved for later in the narrative, when the Figure in the Carpet has begun to emerge.

More important is the fact that it had taken me over two years to reach the decision to sue. They had been years of polite and patient efforts to work within the system to resolve problems, years of long, single-spaced letters of explanations, years of expectation that my public expressions of high-minded principles in university councils were being well received, years of occasional "unladylike" (to men) outbursts of rage to betray my real feelings. Toward the end of this period, I now realize, came more and more elaborate gestures of accomodation and more and more self-doubt, despite the array of facts that were all along staring impudently in my face. Now that I have been on the other side of the mountain and seen the worst that could happen, I know that the important question to be answered—the question other women in the throes of doubt will have to answer—is why I waited so long.

There are several ways to explain why. The first is that I trusted the system with the usual faith participants concede to institutions with whom they contract to be identified, a contract being an emotional as well as an economic commitment. In addition in my case, the identification with Wayne State involved the kind of love-hate relationship that is more usual to families, tracing a long way back to the time when, against advice, I had elected to transfer to Wayne as an undergraduate (rather than attend the most prestigious schools that had accepted by credentials), and later, to teach there (the more prestigious school in the area not having shown great interest in hiring me). I had cared too much and worked too hard, as student and teacher, to help create and advance the national reputation of the school not to feel secure, [illegible] a region of my mind, that I and my kind *were* Wayne State—not the administrators who came and went in the course of peripatetic careers.

A second explanation is pure *distraction*—the distraction of one who could seldom recall how much money I was making, had never got around to looking up the rules on promotion and tenure, was once asked if I had tenure and honestly did not know. Academic life to me was teaching, scholarship, deep involvement with ideas and the world around me; how decisions were reached about faculty careers was a matter I was sure somebody somewhere was taking care of, but such matters seemed extrinsic to my main concerns. I could afford to be distracted, of course, because of a basic confidence that such things would work out one way or another and it was a waste of good energy to worry or scheme. Today I realize my confidence was essentially a sense of privilege born of successful experience in resolving conflicts when personal problems arose, a positive self-image tracing back through three college degrees as an honor student and award-winner (a "firster"), and a fundamental faith, seldom voiced, that if worse came to worse, my record would always speak for itself. To the extent that my sense of privilege has not been shared by others, my case cannot be regarded as a model case, but I doubt that my distraction is unique; indeed, it would rather seem to be an occupational hazard.

PHASE I: FROM PH.D. TO KENT STATE WEEK

A third reason for delay in pressing the issues involved in my case requires more explanation. It has to do with my commitment to interdisciplinary American Studies at a time when my disillusionment with the university system itself put me out of phase, as it were, with the times. Upon completing a PhD in American Culture at the University of Michigan in 1961, I was not eager to return to full-time university teaching unless I could teach in my new field, but there were no positions available to permit such an option. Having had enough experience, since 1952, in teaching courses that already existed, fitting myself to a system already established, I wanted now to design my own courses and projects. The only way available to do so was to take on combinations of part-time projects—lecture series, radio and television assignments, part-time credit and non-credit courses (especially in adult education, where I found a warm welcome and the freedom to do whatever I wanted), and the conference format. The upshot was that I spent six productive and eventful years outside the university establishment working in this way. My annual income was ridiculously low for a PhD and I was working harder at my projects than I had ever worked on full-time jobs, but I consoled myself not only with the satisfactions of accomplishment but also with the fact that my life was far more interesting than that of other women I knew with small children (our first was born in 1960, our second in 1961).

I became quite bitter, however, over my inability from year to year to get grant funding to allow completion of the work I had begun with my dissertation on a projected three-volume survey of the American arts; after three attempts met with rejection, feeling I had asked my doctoral committee often enough by now for recommendations, I stopped applying.* I turned instead to writing papers for conferences, sometimes adapting them afterward for publication.

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*Two years later, I was told by a man who regularly wrote references for applicants to the agencies I had tried that it was the fact of being a woman *with children* that was held against me; he cited other cases turned down as proof.

My first was accepted by the ATLANTIC MONTHLY, a boost to the ego; but those articles that emerged from my strongest area of expertise, the interaction of the arts with ideas in America, I could not place. It would take me longer in the area of scholarship to arrive at the same degree of disillusionment with the system—in this case, the scholarly journals available for interdisciplinary articles, particularly on the arts—than it had for me to feel dissatisfaction with the university structure as a place to teach.

In time, however, I began to feel I was not accomplishing as much outside the academy as I had thought I could. Ironically, this was around 1966-67, about the time other teachers were just arriving at their points of disillusionment and making their decisions to leave. (It was also the time that our children were beyond their nursery school years.) I began to feel I could accomplish more, after all, by working inside the system to reform its structure to make it *receptive to the future and the new realities of* the culture, rather than simply opting out. By electing to come back to Wayne State through the Department of Humanities, which was smaller and weaker than either the Departments of History or English, but was by definition interdisciplinary and by its very weakness a place where innovation and leadership might be welcomed, I hoped to be able to teach American Studies and the interrelations of the arts, yet retain the independence of action to which I had become accustomed.

When I joined the Humanities staff in the fall of 1967, this indeed proved to be the case. There had been some "confusion" at the last minute in the dean's office that had changed my official status as adjunct assistant professor from a two-thirds regular position to a part-time position that would not count toward tenure, but since I'd be making the same income and teaching the same courses, including the advanced seminars, it hardly mattered. I was warmly welcomed and my efforts supported by new Humanities colleagues. As president of the American Studies Association of Michigan, I was also well acquainted with most members of the faculty committee that administered the American Studies program, and although regional American Studies activity was then more pronounced than local activity at Wayne State, the possibility for teaching and building the program was promptly presented to me. By the end of the following academic year, I was teaching two Humanities classes and one American Studies class per term, my Humanities classes themselves being extensions of my American Studies interests. By spring of 1969, the American Studies Faculty Committee had unanimously recommended that I be made chairman of the program, and the Humanities chairman was urging me to accept one more year at a term appointment, since he intended to give me "the strongest possible recommendation" for promotion to associate professor with tenure the following year. (He explained that the irregular last-minute change in my status when I first came in 1967 had prevented him for advancing my name in 1968-69.)

The first blow came when I was denied the chairmanship of American Studies by the dean's office on the grounds that I did not have tenure, then denied tenure and promotion by the dean's office on the ground that the request was premature. What was galling at the time was having allowed myself, for the sake of the American Studies program, to be placed in a position of petitioning for tenure against my principles. Initially, my confusion and lack of interest had led me to ask merely for "clarification" of the tenure issue, but in time I began to state publicly that I opposed the tenure system not only because it allowed old and tired professors to go on boring students year after year but also because at Wayne, it operated to prevent the very academic freedom it was supposed to encourage, for the threat of denial served to discourage the non-tenured from speaking and acting upon their convictions.

> They told him to wait until he had tenure, and then he'd be free to speak his piece. So he waited seven years, and by the time he got tenure, he forgot what it was he wanted to say.

Privately, I also felt demeaned by having, in effect, to ask permission to keep a job I felt the University should be asking me to keep.

My feeling toward promotion was entirely different. When the chairman told me his petition for my promotion had been denied, I was genuinely hurt.* Promotion implied professional validation, and I had been told I had earned as much the year before. It was not unusual, the chairman said, for promotion to be denied the first time around; the standard procedure was to grant tenure first, promotion later. Then the news that tenure too had been denied arrived a few weeks later, precisely during the week following the Kent State tragedy, which was followed at our campus, as at others, by intense student agitation and the formation of a Committee of Concerned Faculty, of which I was an active member. It was while attending meetings with top administrators during this tense week that I learned for the first time that universities were supposed to have, as a matter of course, avenues of appeal from decisions such as those I had just received if the faculty member involved felt them to be unfair.

When my departmental colleagues learned I had been denied tenure, they drafted and signed unanimously a petition on my behalf and presented it to the department chairman while I was attending various Concerned Faculty meetings. Part of the problem all along—not an unusual one for emerging interdisciplinary areas—was that there was only one tenured member in the entire department, the chairman, who had no departmental committee to support his recommendations; he alone, in fact, decided on tenure and promotions recommendations, and had been doing so alone for some years. It had been his habit to characterize himself to us as a timid man, trying his best to counter the will of the dean's office. My six full-time colleagues wished to bolster the unusually strong recommendation he had tendered in order to show their agreement with his assessment and strengthen his hand; they also feared that if I were denied tenure with as strong a case as I had, they in their turns could be rejected. (As things have turned out since then, they were right. Of the six, four were denied tenure, three of them despite explicit promises from the chairman; a fifth left the university for another job, seeing the handwriting on the wall; I do not know what has happened to the sixth member of the group.)

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*This preceptive comment by one reader of the manuscript is in point: " 'Hurt' seems too soft, too wishy-washy a word here....Perhaps it was because you were merely 'hurt' rather than justly enraged that you failed to act forcefully, as you later say." The same reader had objected earlier to my stress on personal "distraction" as a reason for delay in filing the suit, saying it would be "too easy" for readers to assume my personal preoccupations were "as much to blame here as the issues you are fighting for. I also believe people (women too) will search for personality flaws rather than institutional flaws, due to the emphasis on psychology in our society." Quite right. What my language (which I have left unchanged) betrays is that I myself have been among the "people (women too)" who tend to place blame on personal rather than insitutional faults.

The question then arose whether to ask to re-open negotiations with the dean's office, using the petition as a wedge. One university officer advised us that it would be perfectly proper to do so, and my colleagues were eager to see me proceed on the basis of their testimony. I was persuaded by the chairman, however, that although he was "glad to have the petition to validate my recommendation and will make good use of it, believe me, when the time arrives," the effort to re-open negotiations at that sensitive time in history would only serve to anger an especially sensitive dean. I should wait until the following year.

In retrospect, I suppose if there had been a moment I should have acted more forcefully, this was the one. But when further inquiries could produce no reasons for the action of the dean or the decision at the college level, I stopped inquiring, the speculation of colleagues over the mystery providing little more than confused and conflicting theories. For one thing, the dean had at last agreed, when the unopposed recommendation by the American Studies Faculty Committee had been presented to him for the third time, that I would become American Studies chairman in the fall of 1970. (I had been serving as *de facto* chairman during the absence of the former chairman from campus the previous year in any case.) For another, both the Humanities and American Studies chairmen had long before assured me, even when I refused to be placed in a position of asking, that "tenure would come in due course"; I was sure it would, and one more year did not seem that long to wait. But the most important reason for remaining silent in the face of what ought to have been a clear warning of things to come was, I think, my sense of having committed myself in 1967 to work within the system despite its faults, through every means available; I was extremely reluctant, after my six years of comparative freedom outside the Establishment, to back down so quickly on that promise. Thus the third of my three reasons for delay in going to court derived from the history of commitment I was dragging behind me.

PHASE II. IN THE THEATRE OF THE ABSURD, 1970-71

In the fall of 1970, I began my duties chairing the American Studies program, only to learn that budgetary factors (which were real enough) would deny us a room, secretarial help, or even a typewriter. Through negotiation, I obtained all three, but at the price of a new kind of tension, familiar to people in American Studies and other interdisciplinary programs the nation over, between the "home" department (Humanities now) and the "parasite" program (American Studies) whose burden of costs it was told it had to carry. (Humanities had burdens enough of its own, and reason enough to feel put upon, since our now popular courses were pulling in more money for the College proportionally to costs than the courses of other departments.) The American Studies Faculty Committee began to meet regularly for the first time. We revised the required and recommended courses on the basis of a new philosophy, we held a meeting of representatives from many departments in the college that offered courses related to the curriculum, and we outlined a future for the program designed to lift the cloud of despair that had hovered over the program through its first eleven years of existence. To resolve questions of our status, budget, and relation to other departments, we decided to ask for a review of the program by the Liberal Arts Faculty Council at its December meeting. The dean, who chairs Council meetings, interrupted my presentation of our case with an outburst that appeared to embarrass everyone present, asking why he had not been approached on these matters before they were set before the council. (My colleagues and the former chairman had assured me that he *had* been approached, year after year, but nothing had been resolved.) The Committee therefore arranged to meet with him separately during the Christmas holidays, intending to return to the LAFC afterward.

But during the meeting with the dean, after we had outlined the steps we had taken and plans for a new course that would bring in enough revenue to pay for our upper-level seminars and other costs, the dean suddenly announced that we should not be making so many important decisions without the chairman present. Since we had all assumed I was chairman (the verification had come to me verbally from the former chairman, again on leave), nobody knew what to say. The dean explained that I was only an interim acting chairman for the year, since someone had to convene meetings and sign student programs and the like. The insult provoked us to ask, at last, why he had rejected the votes of the committee on my behalf. He replied that while I was "hard-working and aggressive," I was only an assistant professor without tenure, while the former chairman was a full professor with tenure. At this point, one of my male colleagues retorted with such contempt that another man present later said he feared the two would come to blows. After the meeting, a third man resigned from the committee. Stunned but too proud to let my own rage show, I ended the meeting muttering that I hoped this matter could be resolved soon so that the program might continue.

With a long conciliatory letter, I attempted to heal the breach. I asked for a separation of concern for the status of American Studies from my personal status. I blush to recall how noble I tried to sound, sublimating my anger beneath the professional veneer of one who can rise above the petty matter of my career. The dean responded by urging that I meet with the associate dean to resolve matters then pending, in a letter ending, "Best Wishes." The associate dean agreed to all changes in requirements for majors and catalog descriptions (it was deadline time for catalog copy), and reported that the dean had agreed to resolve the embarrassment over the question of the chairmanship by listing the former chairman in the catalog as "director on leave" and me as chairman of the program. (In fact, when the catalog appeared late in spring, my title had been changed to "acting director" for the one year only.) I said the title did not matter as long as the program was in good health. But I decided then against returning to the Liberal Arts Faculty Council, with the dean chairing the meetings. Instead, I set about to build the program through the enthusiasm we had instilled among the staff of student advisors and the faculty members we had recently won to our cause.

Some time in January, I chanced to check with my department chairman to ask whether he had included the petition signed the previous spring in his recommendation of me for promotion and tenure that year. To my astonishment, I learned he had not put my name in at all. When I asked why, he replied that "nothing had changed." Was my work any less satisfactory than when he had recommended so strongly the year before? No, as he said, nothing had changed. But since the dean had refused to confirm his recommendation the previous year and had told him he felt no different about me this year, there was no point in putting my name in: "nothing had changed." Through AAUP contacts, I learned that in such situations, I could and should put my own name in to the college; the AAUP representative made a point of asking a friend on the dean's Promotions and Tenure Advisory Committee whether they had my credentials. The next day, the department chairman himself urged me nervously to pick up the appropriate forms from the dean's office (by five o'clock, since the following day was the deadline for submitting applications and all accompanying material). Late that night, I marshalled material and filled out the forms to get them in on time.

To force issues into the open, however, early in February I also drafted two letters (one long-winded and explanatory, the other short and curt) to show to the chairman in order to ask his advice on which to send, letters responding to his offer of another appointment at the same rank and status for the comming year. At a meeting with the Vice President for Academic Affairs, I also discussed one of the letters and was advised that my wording could be misread and misused—I had said I refused the offer extended and if a better offer were not forthcoming, I would prefer a leave of absence to do research. A better woring would be to accept on an *ad hoc* basis and express my expectation that an improved offer was forthcoming. Accepting this advice, I asked the chairman to return my drafts to me, only to learn that he had sent one on to the dean and "acted upon it." Seeking legal advice at this point, I was urged to send a telegram to the chairman (who was in the next room) declaring the contents of my letter null and void and a letter expressing my outrage at his decision to act upon a draft I'd submitted solely for his advice. I began to feel certain I was acting out a melodramatic role in somebody's fevered nightmare, but I sent the telegram. The very next day, a letter arrived at my home (mailed before my telegram) announcing that since I was not accepting the offer extended to me, it was therefore understood that my contract would terminate in June. When, in a matter of days, my revised letter of *ad hoc* acceptance was received, the mails brought me another letter, without explanation, announcing that it was understood that I was accepting the offer extended to me, but this offer, "of course, carried no presumptions of tenure or recommendations thereto."

When I learned at the end of April that promotion and tenure had again been denied (this time I knew enough not to be surprised), I sent formal letters to my department chairman and the dean requesting reasons. The chairman's reply referred me to the dean's letter, and the dean's letter reviewed the procedure that had been followed and invited me to discuss the matter in his office. I wrote again thanking him for reviewing procedure but asking again for the reasons, asking what, for example, I would have to have done to have earned a different decision. No reply came. After waiting a month, which seemed a decent interval, I appealed over the dean's head to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for help in learning reasons. On June 22, I received in writing the reply that it was college policy in Liberal Arts not to give reasons for such actions, but that the dean there followed his usual practice of meeting informally with faculty. He urged me to meet with the dean.

I had also become curious, however, about the role played by the dean's Promotions and Tenure Advisory Committee, which he was crediting with very careful review of all cases and blaming for the decision. Formerly a committee that had advised on promotion alone, its duties had been extended only the previous season to include advising on tenure as well. Informal inquiries led me to understand (1) that it was considered poor form to ask the members of the committee themselves what had transpired during the discussion of one's own case; (2) that the dean alone was empowered to give reasons; and (3) that the recommendations of the dean and department chairman were the factors that weighed heaviest in this committee's deliberations. Curiouser and curiouser. The circularity built into the system was getting downright interesting.

Meanwhile, since I was serious about wanting a leave of absence to work on research, I had inquired about grants still available for the coming year and learned that my only chance was the National Endowment for the Humanities. A tentative proposal forwarded by the WSU research office, describing my project on THE DOUBLE ATTRACTION IN THE AMERICAN ARTS, had received favorable response, so a formal proposal had to be sent in. A change of personnel in the research office during the time my application was being processed led to some inadvertent confusion, for it required a long distance call to me from NEH in Washington to alert us that my formal application was not yet in —and the deadline was one week later! One requirement was a release form signed by department chairman and dean agreeing to a leave of absence for the purpose of accepting the grant. Under pressure from the research office (long distance calls from NEH, whose grants were extremely difficult to get, were rare and impressive), the chairman agreed, saying he certainly saw no difficulty, he would be glad to sign *if* the dean would. The dean, however, refused to sign. There were matters of phrasing in the application that provoked him; he wanted to discuss them with me and the chairman in his office. Next week. The research office called Washington on my behalf and obtained a week's extension of the deadline—an unprecedented courtesy.

The following Monday, the chairman came into my office with some news. It seems he had already met with the dean after all. Eyes fixed on the floor, he announced that he was herewith giving me notice that my contract would be terminated at the end of the next academic year. Also, he and I were to meet with the dean the next day to discuss my grant application. Incredible. I did not know what to think or what to say. Termination of contract seemed to be the price the dean was asking for his signature, but the tactic seemed too obvious, too brutal. I did not understand why I was feeling strangely jubilant, more relieved than angry, and I put it down to a wolgamotish streak of humor that refused to take anything seriously any more, since all the academic world was a stage and all of us were actors in this theatre of the absurd. I wanted the dean's signature, however, so I said it would be fine to meet with him the next day.

Tuesday the dean was downright affable. His objections turned out to be minor (so I then thought)—the use of the title, "Chairman of American Studies," which applied to me now but would not apply while I had the grant (true enough, since I'd be on leave); the reference to six months of time released from teaching—three months of leave for Spring quarter, followed by three months of summer vacation—when in fact only three months were months of *leave* (again, true enough, but NEH accepted summer months as released time, so only a retyped sentence would be required to meet the objections). The dean went out of his way to assure me that he would certainly not do anything to stand in the way of encouraging scholarship through such means, and he said, while shaking my hand, that he would do everything in his power to facilitate matters should I receive this prestigious grant. Still, it took another day before the research office got the signed form out of his office, and the application was not in the mail until Thursday, June 24, one day before the extended deadline. On Friday, I received in writing a letter announcing termination of contract, back-dated to June 21. I did not understand the reason for back-dating the letter, although I was alert enough to have the fact witnessed and the envelope, postmarked June 24, saved.*

*It would take us a year to figure out what should have been obvious—that the dean had cancelled my eligibility for the grant by dating my termination *prior* to the date of mailing the application, since I could not get the usual ten percent financial support from my institution to cover the six-month minimum period of released time if I no longer worked for that institution at the end of the first three months.

But I did understand when the letter arrived why I had felt such unexpected relief the Monday before: I must have known in my bones that the act of termination, but its very absurdity, established my case against the university. The letter gave us our court case. The nightmare of self-doubt was over. There need be no more pretense of applying for promotion or tenure, no more long letters of explanation and conciliation, no more wondering whether there was "really" ("basically," "underneath") something wrong with me.

Three background factors affecting events before and after the week of June 21, 1970, should be added here. The first was my publicized involvement in activities on behalf of university women and the women's movement. This activity had begun with a speech during the summer of 1969 that was written up in the Detroit NEWS and continued through participation in establishing WSU's Commission on the Status of Women, helping to draft the charge against the university submitted to HEW and helping to gather evidence to sexist bias for the HEW investigations, initiating the activation of AAUP's Committee "W" on campus, and cooperating with faculty women from other colleges in coordinating activities after the precedent-setting case of HEW investigation at the University of Michigan. During the winter, a NEWS story carrying my picture had begun by asserting that university women were not waiting for HEW before preparing to take action, that a new group called the Coordinating Council of University Women had been formed when representatives from a number of colleges and states had met recently, but that I (as spokeswoman) refused to name the place of meeting and names of those attending since "the economy is vulnerable right now and some of these women could lose their jobs." Obviously, I did not for a moment think my own job was in jeopardy! A feminist lawyer from Ann Arbor had advised me through the year, and I had listed her name as one to whom carbon copies of some of my letters requesting reasons or expressing outrage had been sent. One obvious explanation for the untoward behavior of administrators might be their resentment less of the fact that I was woman than of these activities *on behalf of* women. Whether one could prove that sexist attitudes were motivating factors was something else again. (Eventually I learned how much worse the sexism was than I had ever suspected.)

Secondly, the university itself was in the familiar dilemma of deadlock in the process of choosing a new president. When no decision had been reached before the former president's announced resignation, an acting president was named to preside during 1971-72 while screening and negotiations continued. I mention the matter because a number of campuses where women are filing cases or successfully petitioning for grievance procedures have been campuses with acting presidents or newly-appointed presidents, vice presidents, or deans. A new administration begins by house cleaning, which may be a good time to call attention to the state of disrepair into which its supposedly democratic procedures have degenerated.

Thirdly, the university in June of 1971 was preparing for a collective bargaining election to take place in the fall. The union (AFT) was a strong contender, and when I detailed the history of my case to them, the union agreed to finance a court action and furnish the lawyers. (Eventually three different organizations offered to underwrite the court case.) The hope was that my case would strengthen the union's image, since it was likely to set a precedent in several ways. By the end of June, therefore, I had left a history of my case, along with supporting papers, filed in the union office. With my grant application in, my duties as American Studies Chairman concluded, my new film course for the fall nearly planned, and the two sessions I was chairing for the ASA National Convention prepared, I retreated into the Michigan woods for the summer to write the report that emerged as AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES (Volume One).

It was this experience, doing research on my own book and learning for the first time how similar were the patterns in my own case to those of other women the nation over, that opened my eyes to the extent that sexist attitudes were involved in decisions affecting me.* As I wrote in the chapter, "Some Room of My Own," I and my assistants emerged from the summer's experience shaken and changed—on the one hand, filled with rage to realize that the years of patient effort and self-flagellation had been misspent, yet buoyed by a newfound confidence in recognizing that we ourselves were not at fault for experiences that we had suffered and that it would be all right hereafter to be ourselves, to be who we were, even "hard-working and aggressive" if we chose.

PHASE THREE: FEVER AT THE BRINK, 1971-72

When I returned to Wayne in the fall, a number of exciting things began to happen all at once. My new American Studies film course was oversubscribed, a great success despite gloomy predictions that it would not cover the cost of the films at a time of economic squeeze; both my new film course and jazz course were written up in a picture story in the school paper. I was busy preparing to attend the Third ASA National Convention in Washington, D.C. My book came out while there and met almost immediately with critical acclaim. I was nominated to the national presidency of the ASA, and another picture story appeared announcing my candidacy as the first woman to be so honored. A week after Washington I was in Omaha sharing a symposium with Robert Motherwell and Alfred Frankenstein in connection with a stunning exhibit at the Joslyn Art Museum on artists of the 1930s. Two sharp student assistants, Ann Sprague and Dee Durkee, were caught in the whirlwind with me, and together, we somehow managed to keep abreast of correspondence and commitments. There was little in the way of time or mood for my court case.

Nonetheless, I urged the union lawyers to proceed. One formal gesture still remained to be completed, left over from the spring's events: a visit to the dean's office to learn the reasons for all the decisions to date. (There had been one more exchange of letters, my request for reasons for terminating my contract again ending in the suggestion to meet with the dean.) I requested that my lawyer accompany me for this exchange. The dean refused to see me under these circumstances. Might a third party be present merely as observer? No, he would see me only if I came alone. On October 5, I went unaccompanied to a meeting with the dean and associate dean (whom the dean called in, without explanation, to be present). I asked for reasons for the refusal of promotion the year of the recommendation, and the reason for refusal without the recommendation. I was told nothing more than I learned in the letters: that the PTAC had recommended against me but it was not college policy to tell me why. Why the termination? Because they don't whan these things to drag on year after year. Why would he not allow my attorney or an observer to be present? Because deans don't speak to lawyers, deans speak to faculty through informal, non-adversarial meetings. Dead end. I then announced that I did not feel our meeting had accomplished anything, that I regarded the damage done to my professional reputation as serious, that the situation had now become an adversarial one and I would have to take whatever steps were necessary to exercise my rights. There being no other avenues open to me, this would mean filing suit. When I left the dean's office this time, there was no shaking of hands.

Between October 5th and December 15th, when the suit was finally filed, a number of steps were taken by the dean's office whose propriety became an issue during the hearings. In the event that it may become important in the future to piece together the full story of what happened between these dates, I do not feel it appropriate to discuss these actions at the present time. Suffice it to say that *after* I had announced that a clear adversarial situation existed, both sides proceeded to prepare cases.

The Associated Press picked up the story of the case as soon as it was filed, and various newspapers and broadcasts announced it. The Detroit NEWS headline was typical: WSU ACCUSED OF SEX DISCRIMINATION, with the subheadline, "Woman Professor Files Suit:" Often the stories themselves would include the fact that the university had been charged with violating both the First and Fourteenth Amendments (denying my rights to freedom of speech and due process under the law, as well as to equal protection of the laws), but the headlines stressed the allegation of sex discrimination more than the failure of the college to give reasons. It is interesting that sex makes news even in this form: sex discrimination is more newsworthy than denial of due process. It was also interesting to learn, as I did eventually, that my action served to give courage to others, male and female, who felt that they had grievances but had hung back from filing suit.

As letters and questions began to come in, I felt it necessary to prepare a position paper outlining the four counts in my case, the four interrelated issues that were involved. Stated in terms of the causes and groups for which my case should speak, these four are:

(1) the cause of interdisciplinary studies and the fate of interdisciplinary scholars in the academic system (in my case, American Studies, Humanities and the Honors Program, but most other forms of area studies might also be cited);

(2) the cause of university women, about which these volumes speak;

(3) The cause of community-related, part-time, non-tenured, term-appointment, joint-appointment, visiting-status, and other hyphenated "irregular" faculty, those who are punished rather than rewarded under the present system for contributing their scholarship and talents to projects outside traditional boundaries—e.g., oral history projects rather than monographs, community-related and continuing education projects, conferences, and the like;

(4) the cause of student involvment, particularly by graduate students, in decisions affecting faculties, university structure, and the directions taken by professions. (In my case, as it happened, the students who have worked under me know more about American Studies and interdisciplinary methodologies, and are better able to compare traditional to experimental methods of interdisciplinary scholarship and judge them, than any of the principals involved in the decisions in my case.)

It would have made matters easier, I am sure, had there been only one issue involved. But all four were involved, all four were interwined, and I insisted to my lawyers that I cared very much about all four. It must have made life difficult for those accustomed to viewing the world in terms of the definitions contained in law to find me adopting a position of reluctance to ask for tenure, saying I "did not believe in tenure," while at the same time asking how I might design my petition to incorporate aspects of all four issues into the brief. At the time the case was filed in Federal District Court, only two and, by extension, three of the four counts (No. 2 and No. 3, possibly No. 1) had been incorporated, and I was still looking for means to dramatize all four, lest the fundamental issues for which the case might establish precedent become submerged beneath the weight of lurid detail.

The opportunity soon presented itself, although at first I did not recognize its meaning. A month after litigation was announced, the acting president of the university asked to meet with us to ask us to submit our case to an *ad hoc* faculty review board he intended to convene for the purpose of considering several cases then pending. It was a cordial meeting, and we agreed in principle to the idea of a grievance panel; it would establish the right of faculty to appeal decisions made at the college level. However, we wished to reserve the right to continue in the courts if we were unhappy with the panel's operations, and we wanted to examine the guidelines given to the board (its charter, in effect) before agreeing to appear. In February, the guidelines were presented, and the first case (that of a male faculty member in a traditional department) began to be heard; in March, we replied that the guidelines were inadequate, requiring modification to fit my case. We were also unhappy about new proviso that in order to appear before the board, we must agree to "dismiss" the court case. The weeks dragged on. We waited to learn how effective the board would be with its first case, also a union case and also involving the dean and associate dean of Liberal Arts.

On March 24, 1972, the ASA of Michigan met for its annual session with the Michigan Society of Science, Arts, and Letters. At its business meeting, a resolution on my behalf was unanimously adopted, copies being sent to the president of the university, the president of the ASA, and to me for such distribution to others as might be thought most useful. Strongly worded, the resolution managed to touch base on three of the four counts in my concern (No. 1, No. 2, and No. 4). The unanimity of my good colleagues in their support was a moment I will not forget. Among those voting were a former national president, six regional presidents, between four and twelve chairpersons of American Studies programs at different universities, and an assortment of ASA members ranging from newcomers to veterans. Only two faculty members from Wayne State were among those voting. Secretary-Treasurer Frank R. Rossiter sent the resolution to President Gullen.

> The American Studies Association of Michigan learns with dismay that Prof. Betty Chmaj, a distinguished member of the discipline and leader of our association, has been compelled to seek protection of her 5th and 14th Amendment rights in an action against Wayne State University. Dr. Chmaj is the unanimous choice of the Wayne State American Studies Committee for Chairman of Wayne's American Studies Program. But despite the support of her colleagues and students, Dr. Chmaj has been denied the normal recognitions of promotion and tenure to which her academic achievements entitle her. This situation constitutes one of those rifts between faculties and administrations which threaten to constrict academic freedom.
>
> The case of Dr. Chmaj is of particular concern to scholars in

American Studies because we are convinced that the survival and development of our discipline is called into question when administrations treat its most vigorous and effective professors as expendable. It will be of general concern to all scholars who understand that the health of interdisciplinary scholarship is crucial to the future of higher education in America.

The case of Dr. Chmaj is also of wide concern to all who recognize that American universities are bastions of male supremacy and who are indignant at the continuing discrimination against brilliant women.

The case of Dr. Chmaj is of deep concern to all who have learned from the campus turmoil of the sixties that when administrators are deaf to the legitimate voice of students, education suffers.

For these reasons the American Studies Association of Michigan hopes to learn of the speedy vindication of the rights of Dr. Chmaj at Wayne State University.

The ASAM Resolution was endorsed by the Wayne State American Studies Faculty Committee and the student American Studies group at Wayne, as well as other groups who learned of it. I began to see that my case could set a precedent for American Studies as well as American women if I could find some way to get the story of interdisciplinary scholarship told in my own way. When in May, therefore, I met again with a lawyer representing the university to reconsider the request to submit our case to the review board, this question was foremost in my mind—namely, how might the guidelines be amended to suit the special case of interdisciplinary activity and programs, which was where my own strength lay? The answer was an interpretation of the "relevance" clause ("Was there adequate deliberation by the department or the college over the import of the evidence in the light of relevant standards?"); what we were saying, in effect, was that standards relevant to traditional areas were not relevant to interdisciplinary areas of teaching and production. We were also saying that deliberation over other kinds of evidence, such as that bearing on my national ASA activities, was inadequate. We were free—indeed, obligated—to submit statements from people in my fields of expertise that spoke to relevance and adequacy.

Our other objection, the proviso that we dismiss our case, was also amended to read "dismiss without prejudice to either side"; that meant we could proceed in the courts if we felt the recommendations of the board or the actions of the president upon these recommendations to be unsatisfactory. Under these conditions, we accepted the invitation to submit the case to the faculty review board.

It now became my task to make long-distance calls to officials in American Studies and women's studies organizations, requesting that letters be sent to the review board pertaining to the issues involved. In addition, there were various resolutions and letters from groups and individuals that were volunteered or requested by others. The process of collecting such material had to be completed in a very short time, making it impossible to contact certain persons whose statements should have been included in the dossier. (To them and others who have since asked why I did not contact them, or who wish to know if letters are still of any use, let me express my gratitude and indicate that if the case does indeed continue to the higher courts, such letters and documents could be of great importance.) When the contents of all these documents was made known to me, in the course of the hearings, I found an enthusiastic validation of my whole life's work, detailed and documented, pouring into the few fevered weeks of June and July during which the hearings occurred.

There were twenty-seven documents in all. They included letters from the following universities: Harvard, Yale, Minnesota, California, Wesleyan, Pennsylvania, State University of New York, Michigan State, George Washington, and, of course, the University of Michigan; there were letters from persons with official affiliation to the following organization: the American Studies Association, the American Federation of Teachers (WSU), the American Association of Colleges, the President's Commission on the Status of Women, the Community of Scholars Concerned about America, and the John Barton Wolgamot Society; there were letters from student organizations, former students, graduate students, and students at other universities. Such was the impact of these letters that the *ad hoc* board felt "impelled" to append a number of them to the recommendation is sent to the president upon conclusion of the hearings, stating:

> ...a number of people of obvious academic stature submitted letters which are quite laudatory as to her accomplishments in the area of American Studies. These letters are annexed and as will be seen from their content, cannot be readily dismissed as typical "puffing" recommendatory letters...

The amount of time and energy that went into these documents continues to fill me with awe and gratitude. Most are too long to quote, but two delightfully enigmatic telegrams (happily, telegrams must be short!) will serve to suggest the tone. One, a cablegram from the chairman of American Studies at the University of Michigan, who was in London at the time, probably was garbled in transit across the Atlantic:

> PADDINGTON LONDON
>
> ...
>
> FOR AD HOC FACULTY REVIEW COMMITTEE IMPORTANCE OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES ESPECIALLY AMERICAN CULTURE FOR NATIONAL AND LOCAL STANDING OF WAYNE IS INDISPUTABLE BETTY CHMAJS STATUS IMPERATIVE
> MARVIN FELHEIM CHAIRMAN AMERICAN STUDIES

The other came from Avis Voorhes of Greenwich, Rhode Island:

> THEY DONT SEEM TO HAVE ANY RULES IN PARTICULAR AND YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW CONFUSING IT IS HOW RIDICULOUS NOT TO HONOR WAYNE BY GRANTING DOCTOR CHMAJ TENURE LIKE ALICE IN WONDERLAND CHMAJ IS BEING SCOLDED FOR BEING ONE MILE HIGH

It was this charming telegram that supplied an epigraph for this chapter. "They don't seem to have any rules in particular" came to seem especially apt when the assurances the deans and department chairman had given me over the course of the previous years were contrasted to the statements they made during the hearings themselves. (The most amusing instance of this was the problem of Counting the Years Toward Tenure. When I had first been refused tenure, the word came down that my request was "premature"—only the two years I had spent in the Humanities Department as regular, full-time faculty could be counted, and these were not yet enough. When, however, my notice of termination of contract was sent the following year and the review board questioned the dean for reasons, it seemed he had decided I had six and one-half years to Count Toward Tenure—my previous years teaching under other departments were to be included, after all—and that meant seven years were almost up!)

The batch of letters sent on my behalf were one major factor in pulling me back from the brink of despair, easing the emotional fever that had continued to mount as the hearings themselves approached. Another factor was a series of unexpected job offers.

Contacting officials necessarily meant announcing my potential availability, so some concluded, whether I won the case or not. At a time when almost no one in the universities was hiring, when the time for hiring for the coming year had long since past, I began to get calls from around the country offering jobs. At first, I was sure these must be bogus offers somehow arranged by WSU administrators to buy me off, to put the matter crudely. (In one case, I am almost certain this was true, but I may never know. One of the jobs included an offer to my husband as well.) I did not really want a new job. The truth was that I was hoping to take a year off while the case in court proceeded, even without grant support or leave of absence, to write. I wanted to win my case and then go back to continue building the programs I had fought to establish at Wayne State. However sordid the situation there seemed on the surface of things, I could not envision starting a campaign like mine without carrying through on the principles for which it was fought.

One of the offers, however, proved too interesting to refuse, the offer of Distinguished Visiting Professor at California State, Sacramento, an assignment requiring interdisciplinary expertise and deliberately designed to "focus the attention of the entire campus upon an area of study of high general importance to modern society." Not only did the offer describe precisely the kind of thing I like best to do, but it gave me the option to leave after a year or stay on, should I decide I did not wish to return to Wayne, fall in love with California, or lose my case. (The last possibility looked real for a moment in July when the Roth decision was handed down by the Supreme Court; more on this later.) For me, the California post would offer time and perspective to consider whether, after all, I had allowed myself to become too deeply involved with Wayne State, and whether, under its new administration, it would be a place to which I would care to return at all. The post included a jump in rank to full professor, and jumps in rank—as Blanche Gelfant had pointed out to me a year before—were as important to the women's movement generally as they were to individual women. If the salary scale for California state universities was low, the Distinguished Visiting Professorship still paid more than enough for my needs and more than I had been getting at Wayne. Other offers carried higher salaries, but not with these satisfactions. My husband's analysis was a bit more blunt: It was an offer I could not afford to refuse, he felt, for by going to California, I would automatically win my case at Wayne, whatever happened during the hearings; how, after a distinguished professorship at one state university, could another justify refusing a tenured post in a senior rank? Work on my books could wait a few years longer.

PHASE FOUR: THE HEARINGS AND THEIR AFTERMATH

It is difficult today, in the wake of the national Watergate scandal, to convey the sense of unbelief that I took away from the first few sessions of the hearings on my case. Indeed, as I watch the entire nation reacting to the

Watergate episode almost one year later—refusing to believe that the high officials it had trusted could behave this way, casting about for justifications and scapegoats, listening to explanations by the guilty that have a curious way of sounding as if they made sense—I am struck with a strong sense of *deja vu*.

Uppermost in my mind when I first went to my hearings was the question, What am I doing here? What had I to do with lawyers and hearings and complex legal maneuverings? After all and all, could not the whole unpleasant confrontation have been avoided somewhere along the line, somehow? But twenty-four hours later, after I had seen the material submitted to the board by the dean's office, I was wondering not only how I could have asked those questions but why every woman in American universities and every interdisciplinary scholar did not sue, or threaten to sue, and promptly. I also remember at the time feeling very stubborn about refusing to give in to the emotional strain, worse than anything I had ever experienced. With the blood of my Finnish ancestors in my veins and a "SISU" poster on my office door, I insited on meeting all normal obligations as if the world had *not* gone mad—proctoring my exams and correcting them (it was final exam week), advising students, meeting national commitments, answering office mail.

The first of the hearings established the ground rules. Neither I nor my lawyer would be allowed to question witnesses, or even speak when they were present; the three board members and the university attorney would ask all questions. We could be present during the testimony, and transcripts of the tape-recorded sessions would be made available to us. We could suggest witnesses the board might call although the board was not obliged to call them. Before and after witnesses spoke, we could submit statements, documents, and refutation. Most important was the requirement that we agree to the "confidentiality ruling"—that is, that we agree in advance never to disclose the contents of materials submitted during the hearings. The explanation for the requirement was that we would be seeing material that had been obtained under the promise of confidentiality, that it was right we should see the contents of this material because—on constitutional grounds—it was a basic right of the accused to be faced with any accusers, but that it would be extremely poor form if we were to let it be known that we had seen it. (Incidentally, material I have quoted in this text is free of the confidentiality ruling by virtue of having been selected from among the twenty-seven documents sent on my behalf to be appended to the board's report.) Upon our agreement to the procedures, we were given copies of the "sensitive" material submitted to the board by the dean.

As soon as I saw this material, I knew why the dean had insisted on confidentiality. Well before the parallels between my case and the Watergate affair had begun to impinge upon my consciousness, I had begun to wonder whether the more honorable thing to do would not have been to violate confidentiality deliberately. Others urged as much upon me: "The ship of state leaks at the top, Betty." "Ellsberg told—and he's a hero!" I acknowledge the advice. I can report one unsuccessful attempt to communicate, without quite breaking confidentiality, through an intermediary to one of those whose involvement in my case I knew had been based upon ignorance of fact. Unfortunately, the individual did not guess my point in seeking to reach him and turned in rage for explanation to the very university administrators who had misled him, rather than to me. One issue, I will here risk pointing out, was the question of whether the dean and associate dean attempted to solicit unflattering statements about me by saying I was under consideration for promotion and tenure, rather than telling the truth—that my contract had already been terminated and I had already announced my intention to sue. Obviously, the answer to that question would shed light on the claim by the dean's office to have made "good faith efforts" in investigating my case, cited in the review board's recommendation.

This is as far as I wish to go at present, however, in specifying aspects of the opposition's case that angered me. Almost as upsetting was the decision by the review board, after hearing all the "unfriendly" witnesses we had named, to refuse to call any of our "friendly" witnesses—except for one, whose chance to testify was itself accidental, since he was leaving town for the summer and the board had to agree to hear him early or not at all. My lawyer registered official protest in mid-July against the decision to call no more witnesses, and we were left to speculate over the reason for the decision. By a curious timing, the Supreme Court decision on the Roth case was handed down during the middle of my hearings, and it was soon afterward that the review board announced it would call no more witnesses. There seemed to be a connection. *Board of Regents of State College v. Roth,* 40 Law Week, 5079, concerned a non-tenured professor's right to be given reasons for denial of tenure, the Court reversing decisions at lower levels to rule (so it seemed at first) against Roth, thus seeming to support the dean's position that the university did not have to supply reasons to non-tenured faculty for its actions. The gossip in administrative offices at WSU that week, so I was told, was that since the Roth case, "the university no longer owed Betty Chmaj anything." As it turned out, however, the review board itself cited one aspect of the Roth case as precedent in *upholding* its decision on my behalf.

Granted that the hearings seemed to be going in our favor even when only the "unfriendly" witnesses (dean, associate dean, department chairman) had been called, I was nonetheless outraged at being prevented from answering certain charges I was fully prepared to answer, having located the necessary evidence and called the persons to refute every one of them. Half a year later, at an MLA convention in New York, I heard Delores Barracano Schmidt speak to a gathering of women scholars concerned about their legal rights. Schmidt had just won her case against Slippery Rock State College in Pennsylvania, setting a precedent for winning retroactive salary adjustment (among other things) after a grueling experience in court. "You can never answer all the lies administrators are likely to confront you with under the present system," Schmidt said. "I was furious with my lawyers because they would not try to answer everything. It seemed as soon as we answered one lie, the administrators would come up with another." Her lawyers persuaded her, she said, that the important thing to do was stay with the issues necessary to win the case and not try to cope with everything, since the details could make the case endless. My own lawyer also advised me—but *after* we had learned we'd won the first round, the review board having recommended in my favor—that my rage to hold university officials accountable for every falsehood they had used would probably dissipate in time, melt away under the friendly California sun.

I learned of the favorable recommendation by the board on the occasion of a farewell party given for me on the eve of my departure for California. I was then struggling to begin this book, clean out my office, and pack for the trip. The news of our victory buoyed our spirits as my daughter and I boarded the plane for the trip. Once in California, the many facets of our new life kept me too preoccupied to wonder why the WSU president had not acted upon his own board's recommendation; before leaving Detroit, I had spoken by telephone with the new provost (the man who was appointed to replace the Vice President for Academic Affairs, whose office was abolished by the new president); the provost had given me verbal assurance that, should there be some delay, a request for a leave of absence for one or two years in order to accept so prestigious an offer as a Distinguished Visiting Professorship would certainly pose no problem.

Over two months after the board's recommendation, I finally heard from the president, by way of a long-distance call from the provost, on the action he wanted to take to implement that recommendation. His response was to call a "de novo" review, which meant paying no attention to anything said by either side but starting an investigation entirely anew. He wished to establish a board composed of experts in my field, selected from a national pool, who would judge the quality of my scholarship. I was to submit a list of materials and send copies of monographs to be sent to these three persons. I was not to know who the members of this panel were. All the rest of my university work was to be evaluated through the efforts of an investigator appointed by the president for that purpose, a retired WSU professor with whom I could confer. No, they had not been in touch with my Detroit attorney on the matter, but this was what the president had "decided" to do. Period.

My initial reaction was that it would be very nice indeed—as I reflected on the possible persons of reputation who would qualify as bona fide American Studies and Humanities experts to serve on such a panel—to have my scholarship evaluated by a blue-ribbon panel. I had always done well as a scholar before such panels and felt I would probably learn a great deal from their remarks. I contacted my former lawyer, George Newman, who had done such a fine job during the hearings, but since he had left the law firm representing the American Federation of Teachers—which was paying all expenses in my case—it would be necessary to change lawyers, as it were, in midstream. The union's firm then called Craig, Feiger and Golden, had handled the case that had preceded mine before the same faculty review board, and was familiar with the entire situation at Wayne State University.

Here I might interject to call attention to a facet of many cases now in progress involving the eternal triangle of a woman professor, her male lawyer, and the university. There are bound to be times when a professor and an administrator share more perceptions and attitudes in common about their own university than either does with the lawyers representing him or her. Similarly, it is well known that lawyers like to speak to other lawyers in their own language, even when pitted as adversaries. The triangle is complicated by the fact that at this time in American history, there are few feminist lawyers, male or female, prepared to take on cases against universities. On the one hand, there is the ancient belief that one should trust one's lawyer, whatever happens, and act upon the lawyer's advice. On the other hand, there is for women the constant question of the degree to which the law and lawyers are themselves sexist in orientation. (I have heard of cases when union or AAUP lawyers were outright sexist in attitude.) Many times women report having to begin their cases by taking on the responsibility of "straightening out" their own lawyers, and one hears stories of the role that lawyers' *wives* and female law clerks fulfilled in providing the link that made communication possible through such barriers to confidence. It is a good rule of thumb, pointed out by persons authoring handbooks for women planning to initiate legal action, to seek counsel from feminist sources and have backing from feminist groups throughout the proceedings. (See Adrian Tinsley and Elaine Reuben, ACADEMIC WOMEN, SEX DISCRIMINATION, AND THE LAW: AN ACTION HANDBOOK, p. 8) In my case, I was fortunate in knowing feminists on the faculties of both Wayne State and Cal State with whom I could discuss my case.

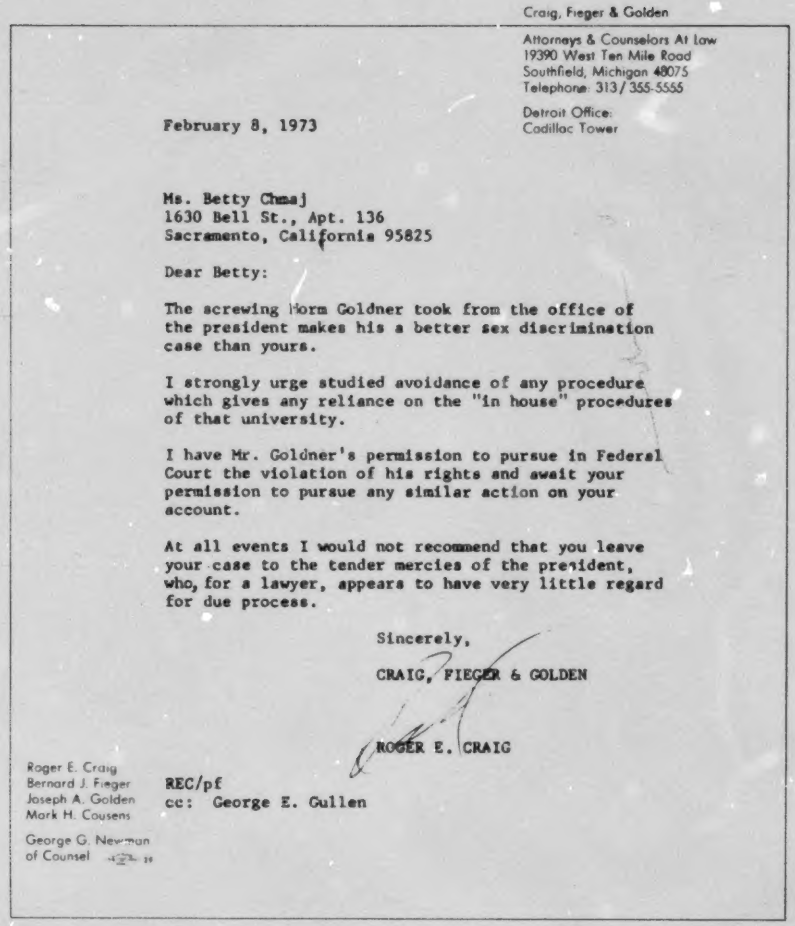
It was to such women I turned when I began to have second thoughts about the procedure outlined by the WSU president. While I had the highest respect for my attorney's legal abilities, I could not favor his suggestion that I pair my case with that of the male professor, Norman Goldner of Sociology, whose case had preceded mine, and follow a similar route. Goldner had agreed to the *de novo* review. I was advised to let this part of the procedure take its course, then go back to the courts if we did not like the results. I began to have doubts. Who was to serve on the panel? How would I know the three members really were qualified in American Studies and Humanities? Would they be all male? Behind the cloak of anonymity, could not the dean and provost (by now, I had learned the two were good friends) select any panel that would confirm the position the dean had taken during the hearings, using their findings to refute all the testimony the twenty-seven documents had offered? Might the entire procedure, in fact, be a bluff or a hoax—a means to set me up for examination by "star chamber" tactics, to which I would be giving tacit assent if I mailed so much as a single monograph to the provost?

Uncertain over how to proceed, I wrote to the president asking about the procedures and whether they could be amended in the interest of greater fairness and less anonymity. The provost replied on behalf of the president that I should send the materials requested. For three months, we seemed engaged in a long-distance "dialogues des sourds," one side acting as if it had not heard what the other had just said. On hearing from my attorney, I decided to delay until I heard the results of the procedure in the Goldner case, but even if they were satisfactory, I was unwilling to go ahead until I knew far more about the procedure than I felt I could learn while in California. For the most part, I played a delaying game: I really did not know what to do.

Meanwhile, California itself was winning me over, despite my perverse resistance to everybody's prophecy that it would. I found myself at a new university that had suddenly expanded to an enrollment of 17,000, had managed to implement liberal programs that Concerned Faculty Committees on other campuses had scarcely succeeded in making a case for, and had developed, all unnoticed, one of the best women's studies programs in the nation. It had a new Department of Humanities in which I could teach, and it was interested in having me establish an American Studies program of significance on the campus. While there was much that it needed in the way of strengthening in more traditional ways, its faculty was good and its general organization much more democratic than anything I had found elsewhere. There were strong arguments in favor of deciding to stay on as professor of Humanities, American Studies, and Women's Studies (not a joint appointment but a triple appointment!) for at least another year.

I had to announce this decision by the end of January and then write to inform Detroit and elsewhere. While still uncertain over my choice, an announcement arrived of an opening at a university back east, one that I would have given almost anything to have had offered to me a few years before. It was then I realized how thoroughly beguiling the weather and the welcome California had provided me really were; the very thought of returning to cold northern winters and huge impersonal universities before I had had my share of California sunshine was enough to chill me.

What to do, then, about my case against Wayne State, if I would not be coming back anyway? On February 8, 1973, two letters arrived from



Craig, Fieger & Golden

Attorneys & Counselors At Law
19390 West Ten Mile Road
Southfield, Michigan 48075
Telephone: 313/355-5555

Detroit Office:
Cadillac Tower

February 8, 1973

Ms. Betty Chmaj
1630 Bell St., Apt. 136
Sacramento, California 95825

Dear Betty:

The screwing Norm Goldner took from the office of the president makes his a better sex discrimination case than yours.

I strongly urge studied avoidance of any procedure which gives any reliance on the "in house" procedures of that university.

I have Mr. Goldner's permission to pursue in Federal Court the violation of his rights and await your permission to pursue any similar action on your account.

At all events I would not recommend that you leave your case to the tender mercies of the president, who, for a lawyer, appears to have very little regard for due process.

Sincerely,

CRAIG, FIEGER & GOLDEN

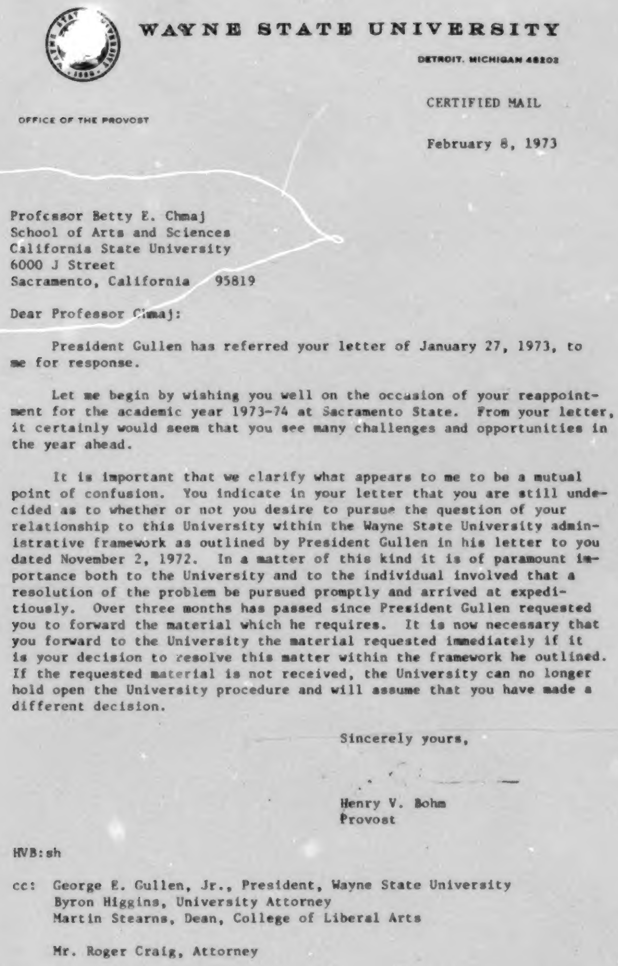
ROGER E. CRAIG

REC/pf
cc: George E. Gullen

Roger E. Craig
Bernard J. Fieger
Joseph A. Golden
Mark H. Cousens

George G. Newman
of Counsel

Detroit—one from my lawyer, one from the provost—that helped force matters to a crisis. I found the irony in the contrasting tones and attitudes entirely delicious, even as I subsequently wrote to the WSU president, to whom carbon copies of both letters had been sent, that while "the tone of both letters is, for very different reasons, unsettling, the fundamental point is that I am being urged to take action in two contradictory directions." In connection with a trip I had to take to Chicago the following April to attend a national ASA meeting, I planned a detour home for four days, in part to talk with the president, provost and my lawyer, to decide what to do. Then, on returning to California, I wrote to President Gullen of my response to the interview. These three letters speak for themselves, and the reader can piece together the implications of what had happened to date.



WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48202

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

CERTIFIED MAIL

February 8, 1973

Professor Betty E. Chmaj
School of Arts and Sciences
California State University
6000 J Street
Sacramento, California 95819

Dear Professor Chmaj:

President Gullen has referred your letter of January 27, 1973, to me for response.

Let me begin by wishing you well on the occasion of your reappointment for the academic year 1973-74 at Sacramento State. From your letter, it certainly would seem that you see many challenges and opportunities in the year ahead.

It is important that we clarify what appears to me to be a mutual point of confusion. You indicate in your letter that you are still undecided as to whether or not you desire to pursue the question of your relationship to this University within the Wayne State University administrative framework as outlined by President Gullen in his letter to you dated November 2, 1972. In a matter of this kind it is of paramount importance both to the University and to the individual involved that a resolution of the problem be pursued promptly and arrived at expeditiously. Over three months has passed since President Gullen requested you to forward the material which he requires. It is now necessary that you forward to the University the material requested immediately if it is your decision to resolve this matter within the framework he outlined. If the requested material is not received, the University can no longer hold open the University procedure and will assume that you have made a different decision.

Sincerely yours,

Henry V. Bohm
Provost

HVB:sh

cc: George E. Gullen, Jr., President, Wayne State University
Byron Higgins, University Attorney
Martin Stearns, Dean, College of Liberal Arts

Mr. Roger Craig, Attorney

The most recent exchange of letters (shown in *Figures* 6 and 7) brings the case to where it now stands. My case against Wayne State University could conceivably go on for years, possibly all the way to the Supreme Court; it could also be settled out of court very quickly if the circumstances were right.*

**Editor's Addition August 20, 1973:* The circumstances were right as of today for a settlement out of court, one that included equity salary adjustment retroactive for 1971 and 1972, along with a warm acknowledgment by President

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
6000 J STREET SACRAMENTO CALIFORNIA 95819

May 13, 1973

President George E. Gullen, Jr.
Office of the President
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan 48202

Dear President Gullen,

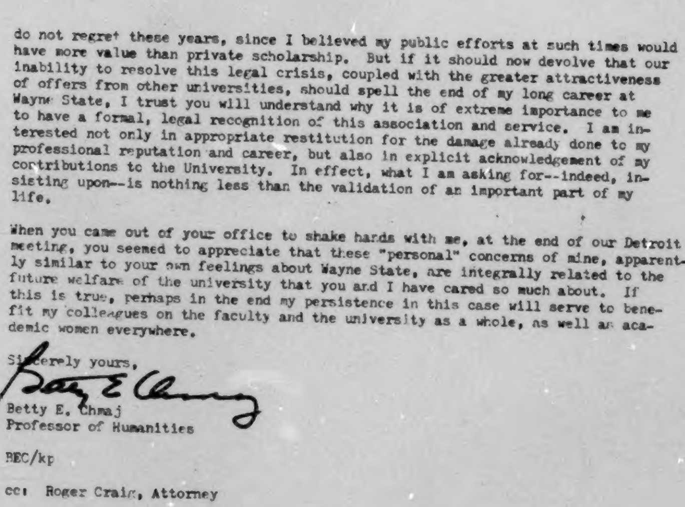
I was happy to meet with you during my April trip to Detroit, but as you must have inferred, I was disappointed in the practical results of the meeting.

First of all, I was disappointed to discover that you personally knew so little of what actually transpired during the hearings conducted by the ad hoc review board you appointed last year. If I understand you correctly, the final recommendation by the board is the only document you have seen. This fact does help to explain, however, one aspect of your subsequent actions that has perplexed me--namely, your decision to suggest another review of my case by a second board. Had you been familiar with the transcript of the hearings, you would have discovered that a de facto review of my scholarly credentials had already emerged from the materials and letters submitted on my behalf. Although the ad hoc board had originally been constituted to review procedure alone, it became virtually impossible in my case to separate procedure from content-- a fact that board members had occasion to call attention to again and again, as a reading of the transcript would have shown. The board's decision to append to its recommendation so many of the letters and statements submitted during the hearings by qualified persons in my field, representing universities across the nation, was itself an indication of the extent to which an evaluation of the quality of my scholarship and my national reputation had already taken place by last July. This being the case, your subsequent proposal of a de novo review was bound to appear to me and to those advising me not only unnecessary but suspicious--as if, disagreeing with the decision of your first review board, you were constituting a new board in the expectation of a different decision! The fact the new board was to be anonymous, selected by Mr. Bohm without my advice or consent, only served to confirm this suspicion.

In the course of our correspondence during the year, I had asked both about your familiarity with the transcript and about the fairness of these procedures. My second disappointment after our Detroit meeting was in your answer to my question about adjusting the procedures in the interest of greater fairness. The best adjustment you could offer was that I submit a list of names of qualified persons in my field to Mr. Bohm; however, the University was under no obligation to choose from the names on the list. The procedure, on the face of it, appears self-defeating. The reason you gave for proposing it was that you wished to be consistent with policies on grievance procedures accepted by the faculty union, with which you were then bargaining. My subsequent conversations with officers of the faculty union, however, failed to confirm your interpretation; rather, the union supports the principle that review boards should be constituted through mutual agreement between the aggrieved party and the University. I can only assume that there was, at the time of our conversation, some misunderstanding or lack of communication between your office and the faculty union.

For these and other reasons, I can see little point in prolonging further the delay in resolving my case through long-distance letters which assume that the University's internal procedures will be responsive to my own needs and interests. Unless new developments affecting the case emerge, the only route to resolution I now see is a return to litigation through the courts.

Finally, let me repeat what I said in our meeting about my deep feeling and abiding concern for Wayne State University and Detroit. To both, I have given many years of my life, a great deal of energy, and all the expertise I was able to acquire on a wide range of topics, above and beyond my scholarly interests, that would benefit the University and the city during critical years in their history. It must be obvious that all those television appearances, all those public lectures, all those conferences I directed, all those special courses and community projects, all the work with those urban committees and agencies necessarily came at the expense of my personal interests in research and writing. I



do not regret these years, since I believed my public efforts at such times would have more value than private scholarship. But if it should now devolve that our inability to resolve this legal crisis, coupled with the greater attractiveness of offers from other universities, should spell the end of my long career at Wayne State, I trust you will understand why it is of extreme importance to me to have a formal, legal recognition of this association and service. I am interested not only in appropriate restitution for the damage already done to my professional reputation and career, but also in explicit acknowledgement of my contributions to the University. In effect, what I am asking for--indeed, insisting upon--is nothing less than the validation of an important part of my life.

When you came out of your office to shake hands with me, at the end of our Detroit meeting, you seemed to appreciate that these "personal" concerns of mine, apparently similar to your own feelings about Wayne State, are integrally related to the future welfare of the university that you and I have cared so much about. If this is true, perhaps in the end my persistence in this case will serve to benefit my colleagues on the faculty and the university as a whole, as well as academic women everywhere.

Sincerely yours,

Betty E. Chmaj
Professor of Humanities

BEC/kp

cc: Roger Craig, Attorney

Gullen of "your reputation in American Studies and other interdisciplinary scholarship in the area of the humanities..." and "your contributions to (the Wayne State University academic) community." Although the amount of money involved in the retroactive salary increment was not large, it was of enormous symbolic importance, tantamount to admission by the university of its own guilt and equivalent, for me, to a victory in the courts. The praise of my academic contributions is also tantamount to admission that the *de novo* review was not necessary, and the case may be considered closed.

Whatever happens, the moral of the story for academic women—and for interdisciplinary scholars in positions like my own— is contained in the more or less inevitable advice that positive and negative factors are bound to be combined in any decision they make about suing their own universities. For some, I would advise a frank assessment of personal emotional capacity to endure the strains of delay, detail, and the demeaning aspects of any court action or hearing before they proceed too far. But in the main, I would certainly urge them in the strongest possible way to file suits in courts of law if they possibly can, whether they have tenure or not, rather than rely upon the internal grievance procedures of most universities or solely on the governmental investigations by the offices of EEOC or other agencies. Assemblyman Kurabian is right: litigation through the American court system is part of the democratic process. It is the only way the laws we write can be tested. Women and men, even professors, must no longer be afraid to sue.

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
DETROIT MICHIGAN 48202

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 25, 1973

Professor Betty E. Chmaj
California State University, Sacramento
600 J Street
Sacramento, California 95819

Dear Professor Chmaj:

Thank you for your letter of May 13, 1973. I have given it the careful consideration which it certainly deserves.

I too am disappointed with the practical results of our most recent meeting. It was my own impression that we did understand one another's position at that time and that if the initail hearing indicated the necessity to do so, we would be proceeding with a merit review of your case by qualified individuals who are acceptable to the University.

The grievance panel was not asked or empowered to review your situation on merit. It was procedural and constitutional matters that were before it, only.

You must understand that it is simply not possible for me to set the precedent of having any aggrieved member of the University family unilaterally select those outside individuals who will determine the merits of his or her case as we proceed to the next step.

Once again I urge you to agree with my offer that you submit a list of names of qualified persons in your field to Dr. Bohm. We will be completely fair in selecting individuals from that list or from other appropriate sources.

I am extremely sorry that we had this misunderstanding. You are indeed a wonderful person whom I admire and respect.

Sincerely,

George E. Cullen, Jr.
President

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
6000 J STREET, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95819

14 June 1973

President George E. Gullen, Jr.
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan 48202

Dear President Gullen:

It was certainly kind of you, in your last letter, to express your personal admiration and respect for me, especially under the circumstances. I acknowledge your desire to be "completely fair" in selecting a review panel, should I still elect that route to settlement, and I agree with you that unilateral selection of such a panel by the aggrieved faculty member would not be fair—no more fair than unilateral selection by the university officials would be. (I have never indicated that I wished to select the panel unilaterally.) In short, I appreciate very much the notes of warmth and acknowledgement in your last letter. I would like to respond in kind.

The problem as I see it—although I hope I am wrong—is that at this point, personal warmth and assurance can make little difference. I am sure you are aware that the way this case is resolved has become a matter for general public discussion, that our exchanges of letters will be part of a public record, and that the precedent that results from our actions is sure to be cited at other schools and universities, particularly for interdisciplinary scholars and for academic women. By now, the case has become sufficiently known nationally that whatever we decide will set a precedent for others. I would like it to be a good precedent. I have little enthusiasm for returning to Wayne State since my view of affairs there during my last visit, and I am by now weary of pursuing the case itself, as you must be. But having come this far, we can not turn back. I am quite serious about wanting a just and fair resolution along the lines indicated to you in my last letter.

With the university semester at CSUS concluded, I hope to be able to complete my responsibilities here in order to be home in Michigan by June 21. I will be in touch with your office through my attorney at that time. Let us hope that a way toward resolution can be found speedily as a result of our negotiations upon my return.

Again, my sincere thanks for your generous personal comments about me,

With best wishes,

Betty E. Chmaj
Professor of Humanities and American Studies

cc: Mr. Roger Craig, attorney

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES

POSTSCRIPT TO A PERSONAL CHAPTER

When a young reporter for the school paper was interviewing me for a feature story last year, I scolded her for asking questions about my personal life and about how I'd "managed" things with my family. Had I been a man, I asked, would anyone have asked me what my wife did or how I managed my children's lives and schooling? Wasn't that what writers for the women's pages always used to ask about, and couldn't she see how important it was that women receiving honors should be regarded first as professionals? She agreed, but when I relented to explain how the four of us had reached the decision to make this a year of adventure— with my daughter coming with me to California, my son staying with his dad in Detroit, the four of us vacationing together at Christmastime to decide what step we should take next—the reporter began to talk about herself and her fiance, about their hopes and fears for married life. After a while she said I really *should* talk about the personal side of things, because it was important to people like herself and him to know a thing like this could be done—it was setting an example to others. I asked then if it might not be dangerous to suggest a model that would not be easy to emulate, that had yet, in fact, to prove itself out for us.

That was in October of 1972. Even by then, I was learning (as you always do at such times) that John and I were not so unique after all, that there are now many couples attempting precisely what we attempted—with one spouse located half-way across the continent from the other in their respective jobs. In some cases, the woman got the job as a result of Affirmative Action efforts to equalize at upper ranks; in some, the man took a job offer elsewhere while his wife, rather than choosing to follow him, kept the job she had. As in my own case, a number of such people found that friends simply did not ask about their situations, either assuming the two were separating or preferring not to pry. One dear soul, reporting on friends who split up because of jobs, did volunteer this precious remark: "Apparently it's done wonderful things for their marriage!"

In our case, the results of the Great Experiment have been quite different—and this, too is part of the story that belongs in a personal chapter. It is part of the risk that others will have to face, or part of a new opportunity, to those who prefer to see it so. After twenty-one years of married life, John Chmaj and I are parting, under Michigan's no-fault divorce laws. John had strongly agreed that I should come to California and further agreed, after our pleasant vacation together over the holidays, that both the children should have at least a couple of years in California for the experience it would give them. He had every intention, when we first agreed that I should come here, of leaving his job and spending time writing until he found something here he liked. But when he came to Sacramento at holiday time (the rainy season), he was disappointed in what he felt to be a constricting world, a less than cosmopolitan atmosphere for him and his particular interests (Sacramento's business world is admittedly rather parochial in comparison to Detroit's). When I was pressed for a decision on whether to stay another year and said I would, he felt pressed to voice his sense of doubt, and to suggest divorce. He said that each of us could look forward to a good twenty productive years ahead; we had never wanted to stand in one another's way, and this was, I felt, no time to begin. He wanted the divorce to be accomplished as amicably as possible, so as to preserve our memory of twenty happy years. Whatever I decided about the children he would agree to; ideally, he would like the sort of joint custody that Joan Baez had asked for.

And that, in a paragraph, is what has happened on the personal side as a result of my suing my own university. Beginning next fall, the two children will be in my custody here (there is no such thing as joint custody yet, but perhaps the women's movement will work out models for this too), after we spend the summer at our cabin in the Michigan woods, giving the children a chance to be near their father at length before leaving for California. I do not know what will happen in the future, how I will manage the job of raising two teenagers while fulfilling my commitments to teaching and publication. But I can say I am looking forward to the prospect with much more enthusiasm, apparently, than some of my family and friends feel I ought to display. I gather I am supposed to feel much lonelier than I do, be much unhappier than I am. I do not say the break is easy, and perhaps the business of sorting out property (who gets the scrapbooks? the home movies? all of that) may bring on an emotional crisis we have not yet anticipated. But the truth I am having trouble conveying is that there is a less trauma involved than seems to be supposed.

And this, too, is something I would wish to tell the young reporter and all the others who insist on looking at me (at us) as a role model for developing patterns in human relationships: it is possible for two people to be in love and live together more or less happily, enjoying about as ordinary a marriage as could be found—as humane and comfortable and routine—and then still be able to separate on friendly terms when the need, the chance, the moment arises. This consequence, too, is a cultural phenomenon, no less than the others to which we are having our consciousnesses alerted in recent years. The culture dictates that divorces are supposed to be occasions for sadness, that refusal to weep over them is false bravado, that the two people involved who "pretend" to rationality are probably acting out parts in some Mike Nichols-Elaine May routine. There have been times when I have found myself caught in these opinions, finding them mirrored in other people's eyes or deep in my own conditioning. Dutifully, I have wept and I have been afraid. But afterward, I have always felt ashamed—ashamed not for tears themselves but for the recognition that they were prompted more by sentimental notions of what I "ought" to feel than by the truth.

In an article in the Sunday New York TIMES of March 4, 1973, Betty Freidan spoke of her own divorce in the course of recalling events during the ten years since she had written THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE. "I almost lost my self-respect," she said, "trying to hold onto a marriage." I sympathized with her dilemma, but I could not identify my own feelings about divorce with hers. To consider "trying to hold on" to my marriage"—how? by pleading and begging? sexual seduction? ranting and raving?—is as alien an impulse to me as the experience of identifying with Freidan's Happy Housewife Heroine would have been ten years ago. This difference between us seems to be important. Even when I read THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE for the first time I felt estranged from the experience she described. She herself had lived the mystique, knew it firsthand and could speak with convincing authority on it for that reason; I was the person she defined as the exception who should become the rule. It was, as a matter of fact, marvelously flattering and confirming to be described that way, but it made me feel instantly about ten or twenty years ahead of my time.

I cannot help but continue to feel that even in my attitude toward divorce, I am still living on that unknown advance frontier, still an alien from the experience I am told I ought to feel, whether feminist or otherwise. (I have felt more in common with the Loud family parents, as they discuss their divorce on talk shows, than I do with either Freidan or any of the divorced women I have lately come to know.) At a time when women are groping for new patterns for their lives, professional and private, the difference between two modes of response at the personal level may also be instructive. With my own future as open to speculation and change as it is, I do not wish to impose a false happy ending upon this chapter or upon this phase of my life. But I do wish to raise the possibility that women should reexamine their attitudes about divorce as readily as they reexamine their attitudes about filing suit against their universities. To ask for such a reexamination by using my own example, to suggest thereby that there may be for others, too, new ways of looking at familiar evidence, has been, at bottom, the purpose of this chapter.

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*In a letter to President Gullen (dated June 6, 1972), Nancy Schlossberg, Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women, cites the aspects of my case which "are consistent with the typical pattern that sex discrimination takes in academia":

> (1) I was initially "unable to find a full-time position and, therefore, had to settle for part-time assignments....[with] low pay, no fringe benefits, and no time accrued to tenure or promotion."
>
> (2) When finally hired ostensibly as an *adjunct* assistant professor, I carried "the normal work assignments of a *full-time* faculty member.....,again denied the fringe benefits and credit toward promotion and tenure."
>
> (3) After being recommended for promotion and tenure, I was denied both "and the reasons for the denial were not made explicit."
>
> (4) Although my professional peers unanimously supported my appointment as chairman of the American Studies Program, "the appointment was refused and the reasons for the refusal were not made explicit" other than that I lacked tenure, a requirement which was not made known to the American Studies Faculty Committee until the appointment had been refused.
>
> (5) With full knowledge of this "policy," my peers twice again submitted their recommendation, and "twice again the appointment was denied as were...bids for promotion and tenure."
>
> (6) "Dr. Chmaj has established a national reputation in an interdisciplinary field; has been an active participant in raising the consciousness of American women...; and has given service to the University and the community in various capacities. Now, true to the form that sex discrimination takes, she has been denied tenure, promotion and a contract for the coming year. Again, without benefit of the reasons for denial."

The letter concludes: "It concerns us that at the same moment the University is being asked to show good faith efforts to secure qualified women for faculty positions, it is also engaged in the dismissal of a woman faculty member of national reputation. We are further concerned about this case since it involves a woman faculty member's bid for tenure in an institution which has so few tenured women faculty members."

SEVENTEEN WARNINGS IN SEARCH OF A FEMINIST POEM

1. Beware of the man who denounces ambition;
his fingers itch under his gloves.
2. Beware of the man who denounces war
through clenched teeth.
3. Beware of the man who denounces women writers;
his penis is tiny & cannot spell.
4. Beware of the man who wants to protect you;
he will protect you from everything but himself.
5. Beware of the man who loves to cook;
he will fill your kitchen with greasy pots.
6. Beware of the man who loves your soul;
he is a bullshitter.
7. Beware of the man who denounces his mother;
he is a son of a bitch.
8. Beware of the man who spells son of a bitch as one word;
he is a hack.
9. Beware of the man who loves death too well;
he is taking out insurance.
10. Beware of the man who loves life too well;
he is a fool.
11. Beware of the man who denounces psychiatrists;
he is afraid.
12. Beware of the man who trusts psychiatrists;
he is in hock.
13. Beware of the man who picks your dresses;
he wants to wear them.
14. Beware of the man you think is harmless;
he will surprise you.
15. Beware of the man who cares for nothing but books;
he will run like a trickle of ink.
16. Beware of the man who writes flowery love letters;
he is preparing for years of silence.
17. Beware of the man who praises liberated women;
he is planning to quit his job.

—Erica Mann Jong '63

[Reprinted from the NATION, April 5, 1972. My thanks to Dr. Bernice Sandler, American Association of Colleges, for sending it to me at a most appropriate time—when my hearings were in progress in my case against Wayne State and I had immediate need of warnings No. 4 and No. 14. —B C.]

CHAPTER ONE

IN SEARCH OF THE MODERN AMERICAN WOMAN

JUDITH GUSTAFSON
Wayne State University

Eng. 0571: Periods of American Literature

As the catalog title indicates, this course is organized around periods of American literary history. I have selected five general "eras" as the basis for organization: (1) Nineteenth-century backgrounds, (2) the Teens and the Twenties, (3) the Depression and War eras, (4) the Postwar Era, and (5) the Counter-cultures of the Present. Thus, the "search for the Modern American Woman," the sub-topic we will consider, will be conducted by examining images of women in the literature, films, and other documents produced by each period.

INTRODUCTION: THE CHANGING FACE OF THE AMERICAN WOMAN—1900 to Present

Slide lecture introducing materials, scope, and directions:

You will first see the presentation at clip speed without commentary. Assuming that these selections are representative of contemporary attitudes and values, what are your immediate observations and reactions to the changes in the past seventy years? Do any patterns emerge?

You will then see the presentation again at normal speed with commentary.

Slides will be selected from the following areas: fashions from each decade; changes in advertising campaigns as they reflect changes in attitude toward women (illustrated by products which have been around a long time—Ivory soap, Maytag, Post cereals, Listerine); magazine features on similar themes throughout the years; Presidents' wives; movie stars and movie stills—the transformation of roles played by Bette Davis and Joan Crawford from flappers to Baby Jane and sister; Elizabeth Taylor from NATIONAL VELVET to VIRGINIA WOOLF.

1 O, GRANDMA, WHAT BIG EYES YOU HAD: THE AGE OF INNOCENCE AND THE FLOWERING OF AMERICAN WOMANHOOD

Meeting 2. "Piety, purity, domesticity, submissiveness"—Background lecture examining 19th-century concepts of American women, with statistics, additions, and elaborations on the following studies:

Alexis de Tocqueville, "Young Women in a Democracy" and "How the

Americans Understand the Equality of the Sexes," in DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA.

Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," AMERICAN QUARTERLY, 18 (Summer 1966), pp. 151-74.

Judith H. Montgomery, "The American Galatea," COLLEGE ENGLISH, 32 (May 1971), pp. 890-99.

Page Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1970).

For examples of women's various roles in 19th-century society, we will turn to the artists of the era:

Slides: WHO ARE THESE WOMEN?

Linton Park: "Flax Scutching"

Winslow Homer: "Reading in the Sun," "Long Branch, N.J.," "The Bridle Path," "In the Mountains," "Initials"

Eastman Johnson: "Berry Pickers," "Hollyhocks," "The New Bonnet," "The Little Convalescent," "A Lullaby"

Thomas Eakins: Selections from his many portraits of women—especially those of Miss Elinor Pue, Miss Van Buren, Maud Cook, Miss Parker, and Mrs. James Maple Dodge

Thomas Hovenden: "Breaking Home Ties"

Currier & Ives: "The Age of Brass; or, The Triumph of Woman's Rights"

Meeting 3. Focusing on Edith Wharton's THE HOUSE OF MIRTH, we will conclude our background studies by considering Lily Bart's dilemma and her solution in terms of the 19th-century "cult of True Womanhood."

Supplementary Reading for Unit 1: Wharton, AGE OF INNOCENCE (cf. Lily Bart to May Archer to next Archer generation); Willa Cather, MY ANTONIA (cf. Antonia's hardships in a rural environment to Lily Bart's hardships in New York); review as needed Henry James' classic works on the theme of American innocence as personified in the Young American Girl—DAISY MILLER, PORTRAIT OF A LADY, WINGS OF THE DOVE.

2 I WONDER WHO'S KISSING HER NOW: EMERGENCE OF THE "NEW WOMAN" IN THE TEENS AND TWENTIES

A WHAT'S A NICE GIRL LIKE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?: The Flight From the Village and Those Who Stayed

Meetings 4, 5, 6. Sherwood Anderson, WINESBURG, OHIO
Sinclair Lewis, MAIN STREET

Supplementary Reading for Unit 2 A: Thornton Wilder, OUR TOWN; Edgar Lee Masters, SPOON RIVER ANTHOLOGY

B WHAT'S A NICE GIRL LIKE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE *THIS*?: The Flapper As Urban Sophisticate

Meetings 7, 8, 9. Ernest Hemingway, THE SUN ALSO RISES
F. Scott Fitzgerald, THE GREAT GATSBY

Meetings 10, 11, 12. Theodore Dreiser, AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY
Dorothy Parker, selections from THE PORTABLE DOROTHY PARKER (Viking)

Supplementary Reading for Unit 2 B: Hemingway, IN OUR TIME: Fitzgerald, TENDER IS THE NIGHT; Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald, SAVE ME THE WALTZ; Eugene O'Neill, STRANGE INTERLUDE

3 THEY DID THEIR PART: WOMEN DURING TIMES OF CRISIS—THE DEPRESSION AND THE WAR

A WILL THE REAL GREAT AMERICAN MOM PLEASE STAND UP?: The Mother Figure as a Pillar of Strength and a Source of Energy

Meetings 13, 14, 15. William Faulkner, AS I LAY DYING
John Steinbeck, GRAPES OF WRATH

Supplementary Reading for Unit 3 A: Faulkner, THE SOUND AND THE FURY (Dilsey), mothers in plays of Elmer Rice; Tennessee Williams, THE GLASS MENAGERIE

B THE GREAT ESCAPE—Into the Past or On to Hollywood

Meetings 16, 17, 18. Eugene O'Neill, DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS
Nathanael West, DAY OF THE LOCUST

Supplementary Reading for Unit 3 B: Margaret Mitchell, GONE WITH THE WIND; F. Scott Fitzgerald, THE LAST TYCOON

Further Supplementary Reading on realism for Unit 3: John Dos Passos, U.S.A.; Thomas Wolfe, LOOK HOMEWARD, ANGEL and YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN; Clifford Odets, WAITING FOR LEFTY; Taylor Caldwell, GOD'S LITTLE ACRE.

Films illustrating various trends of the 30s will be scheduled to offer a broader range of examples of women's images. Selections from the following films, as well as those listed later on, will depend on what is available for distribution and what is scheduled for the Late Late Show. (Times and places for showing will be announced in class.)

Gangster Movies (look for the moms and girlfriends): LITTLE CAESAR, SCARFACE, PUBLIC ENEMY

Musicals: Any Busby Berkley flick

Proletarian Films: OUR DAILY BREAD; GRAPES OF WRATH; THEY DRIVE BY NIGHT

Comedies: IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT; MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN; SHE DONE HIM WRONG

Women's Films: ANNA CHRISTIE and SUSAN LENOX (Garbo as Fallen Woman); JEZEBEL (Davis as a woman who would like to fall, historical bitch); DANGEROUS (Davis as deadly modern bitch); BOMBSHELL (Harlow as *Blonde*)

We will continue with films to examine attitudes during the war years (since little literature which finds its way onto college reading lists was produced during this time; the important black writers who do emerge in this period will be considered in Unit V).

Over There: MRS. MINIVER; SO PROUDLY WE HAIL; KEEP YOUR POWDER DRY

Back Here (the world of neurotic women): NOW, VOYAGER; MILDRED PIERCE; LEAVE HER TO HEAVEN; LADY IN THE DARK

Back to Normalcy: TO EACH HIS OWN; THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES; THE MAN IN THE GREY FLANNEL SUIT

4 TO MAKE THE BED AND LAY IN IT: A RETURN TO DOMESTICITY WITH THE HAPPY HOUSEWIFE HEROINE AND THE GREAT AMERICAN BITCH

Before beginning this unit, please read:
Betty Friedan, THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE and Dolores B. Schmidt, "The Great American Bitch," COLLEGE ENGLISH, 32 (May 1971), pp. 900-05. (On reserve)
Meeting 19. Tennessee Williams, A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
20. Arthur Miller, DEATH OF A SALESMAN
21. Carson McCullers, REFLECTIONS IN A GOLDEN EYE
Meetings 22, 23, 24. Edward Albee, WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?
Mary McCarthy, THE GROUP
Supplementary Reading for Unit 4: John Barth, THE END OF THE ROAD; J.D. Salinger, RAISE HIGH THE ROOF BEAM, CARPENTERS; Saul Bellow, HERZOG; John Updike, COUPLES; Norman Mailer, AN AMERICAN DREAM

Film Selections from the Post-War Era:

Marilyn Monroe as Sex Goddess & Dumb Blonde: NIAGARA; SEVEN YEAR ITCH; BUS STOP; SOME LIKE IT HOT; GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES; THE MISFITS
The Perpetual Virgins: Doris Day in CALAMITY JANE, TUNNEL OF LOVE, PILLOW TALK, WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE LIGHTS WENT OUT (as virgin-wife); Debbie Reynolds in SINGIN' IN THE RAIN, SUSAN SLEPT HERE (don't let the title fool you), TAMMY AND THE BACHELOR, THE SINGING NUN
The Ordinary Guy: ON THE WATERFRONT; MARTY; A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

The Suburbs: NO DOWN-PAYMENT; FROM THE TERRACE
The Children: THE BAD SEED; BABY DOLL; LOLITA; CANDY

5 IT AIN'T ME, BABE! OR IS IT?: AMERICAN WOMEN THROUGH THE EYES OF THE COUNTER-CULTURE

Do the men who denounce THE MAN also reject WASP Establishment attitudes toward women? Who *are* the mamas, the chicks, and the groupies?

Meetings 25, 26, 27. Read one (your choice): Jean Toomer, CANE; or James Baldwin, GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Read one (your choice): Eldridge Cleaver, SOUL ON ICE; or THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X

Meeting 28. Your choice of one: Jack Kerouac, ON THE ROAD; Ken Kesey, ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST; Richard Farina, BEEN DOWN SO LONG IT LOOKS LIKE UP TO ME; Robert Heinlein, STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

Meeting 29. *"Rock 'n' Roll"* means just what it says.

Before this discussion, please examine hand-outs of current Top-40 song lyrics and listen to the "dial-access" tape in the Learning Resource Laboratory (channel to be announced). Recorded is a collage from the following sources:

"The Groupies," interview with the rock equivalent of the steno-pool; followed by a Mothers of Invention parody in "What Kind of Girl Do You Think We Are?" and "Do You Like My New Car?" (The Mothers—Filmore East, June 1971).

Bob Dylan: "One More Weekend" (New Morning), "Lay Lady Lay" (Nashville Skyline), "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight" (John Wesley Harding), "Just Like a Woman" and "It Ain't Me Babe" (Greatest Hits), "Just Like Tom Thumb Blues" (Highway 61 Revisited), "Sad-eyed Lady of the Lowlands" (Blonde on Blonde)

Simon & Garfunkel: "Cecilia" and "Baby Driver" (Bridge Over Troubled Waters), "Over," "America" and "Mrs. Robinson" (Bookends), "Scarborough Fair/Canticle" and "For Emily..." (Parsley, Sage, etc.), "We've Got a Groovy Thing Goin' " (Sounds of Silence)

The Guess Who: "American Woman" (Are the Canadians right?)

Jimi Hendrix: "Foxy Lady" and "Are You Experienced?"

Nina Simone: "Peaches"

Janis Joplin: "I Need a Man to Love" and "Piece of My Heart" (Cheap Thrills), "Cry Baby," "A Woman Left Lonely," "Get It While You Can" (Pearl)

Films on the Contemporary Scene: HELL'S ANGELS; EASY RIDER; SHAFT; FIVE EASY PIECES; BREWSTER McCLOUD; PUTNEY SWOPE; THE GRADUATE; MIDNIGHT COWBOY; KLUTE

ALTERNATE UNIT:

"MY MOTHER MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY:" A STUDY IN MOMISM

The topic of "momism" is a possible alternative or additional unit. Compare the treatment Mom gets from the following authors with the image we found in Unit 3 A:

Philip Roth, PORTNOY'S COMPLAINT
Arthur Kopit, OH, DAD, POOR DAD, MAMA'S HUNG YOU IN THE CLOSET AND I'M FEELIN' SO SAD
Wright Morris, MAN AND BOY
Edward Albee, THE AMERICAN DREAM; THE SANDBOX
Ken Kesey, ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST

Supplementary Reading on Momism: Philip Wylie, GENERATION OF VIPERS; David L. Cohn, LOVE IN AMERICA

COURSE STUDY GUIDE

One aim of this course is to examine works which frequently appear on undergraduate reading lists but are seldom examined with the primary focus on the female character(s). As you read each work of literature, consider the following questions:

1. How are female characters presented and developed? To what extent does this characterization represent fantasy or reality?
2. How do the female characters function in terms of the males? How do the male characters view them? To what extent do the author and male characters share the same assumptions about the nature of women?
3. How do the female characters view themselves?
4. To what extent does the presentation of women reflect the attitudes of the time in which it was written?
5. How do women authors view the same period presented by their male contemporaries?

Another goal of the course is to analyze the changes and patterns of change in the image of the American woman. You will read secondary material presenting theories on female sterotypes and archetypes. How accurately do these discussions reflect what is actually presented in the literature? How useful are such classifications? With these questions in mind, read the following by the time we begin Unit 2:

Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL, rev. ed. (New York: Dell, 1969), Chaps. 1-3, pp. 10, 11.
Mary Ellmann, THINKING ABOUT WOMEN (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1968), Chap. 3, "Feminine Stereotypes."

This is primarily a discussion course, a mutual search by students and instructor. Lectures providing background material will be kept to a minimum. Please keep up with the reading schedule; adjustments will be made if the pace proves impossible.

While the search for the American woman will focus primarily on novels and plays, popular literature in the form of movies, magazines, and songs, along with pictorial documents, are an integral feature of the course. We are constantly exposed to these materials which, consequently, play a large part in shaping our ideas about what women are, should, and could be like. For the duration of the course (and, for that matter, the rest of your life), try to become conscious of the ways that such materials—as well as television advertising, billboard images, children's toys, and the like—influence these ideas in both overt and subtle ways.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE AND THE LIBERATED WOMAN

HELEN IRWIN & MARY KEWLY
TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY
ENGLISH 0024
FALL, 1971

REQUIRED READING (available in paperback at the Transylvania Bookstore)

Adams and Briscoe, eds., UP AGAINST THE WALL, MOTHER (to be discussed first week) Kate Millett, SEXUAL POLITICS (to be discussed during the last week)

OPTIONAL READING

Each student is required to read at least four novels, such as those on the accompanying list. Oral reports will be required on two of these. For the other two, commentaries in the journal (see below) will suffice.

JOURNAL

Intelligent reading, analysis and discussion of various kinds of feminist literature involve at least a minimal degree of consciousness-raising. Readers must develop an awareness of the factors in our culture that reinforce traditional sex-role stereotypes if they are to understand how writers use, and sometimes exploit, these stereotypes. To encourage such development, each student in this course is required to keep an *awareness journal* during the three-week term.

The journal should contain the student's reactions to all of the readings undertaken for the course and notations of sexual bias observed in the media, in the educational process, in associations with others, and in activities he or she participates in (see Supplement for suggestions). The journal, handwritten on notebook paper, may be informal. Jottings are sufficient for most of the entries, although a page or two is appropriate for responses to novels.

SUPPLEMENT

I. Children's literature
    A. Such books as all of Louisa May Alcott's; Spyri's HEIDI; POLLYANNA; ELSIE DINSMORE; modern books such as CADDIE WOODLAWN
    B. Bias by sex in math and reading
    C. Librarian's bias: segregated library lists for boys and girls

II. Toys (e.g. Barbie dolls)

III. Comic strips

IV. Advertising (TV, radio, newspaper, magazine, etc.)

V. Magazines, especially so-called "women's"

VI. Popular music (everything from Dylan, e.g. "Just Like a Woman," to Tom Jones, e.g. everything; to the American musical comedy, e.g. "South Pacific")

PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Albee, THE AMERICAN DREAM
    THE SANDBOX
    WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?
Aristophanes, LYSISTRATA
*Barth, THE END OF THE ROAD
E. Bowen, THE HOUSE IN PAIRS
C. Bronte, JANE EYRE
E. Bronte, WUTHERING HEIGHTS
Chaucer, Clerk's, Miller's, and Reeves Tales from THE CANTERBURY TALES
*Chopin, THE AWAKENING
Colette, CHERI
*Crane, MAGGIE: A GIRL OF THE STREETS
Dickens, BLEAK HOUSE
Dineson, OUT OF AFRICA
*Dreiser, SISTER CARRIE
Eliot, MIDDLEMARCH
    THE MILL ON THE FLOSS
*Faulkner, LIGHT IN AUGUST
    SANCTUARY
    THE SOUND AND THE FURY
*F.S. Fitzgerald, TENDER IS THE NIGHT
*Z. Fitzgerald, SAVE ME THE WALTZ
Flaubert, MADAME BOVARY
    A SIMPLE HEART
Graves, THE WHITE GODDESS
Hardy, JUDE THE OBSCURE
    TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES
*Hawthorne, THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE
    THE COMPANY SHE KEEPS
    THE SCARLET LETTER
*Hemingway, THE SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO
    (esp. "The Short, Happy Life of Francis Macomber")
Isben, A DOLL'S HOUSE
    GHOSTS
    HEDDA GABLER
*James, DAISY MILLER
    PORTRAIT OF A LADY
    WHAT MAISIE KNEW
Lagerlof, THE STORY OF GOSTA BERLING
Lawrence, THE FOX
    LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER
    SONS AND LOVERS
    WOMEN IN LOVE
Lessing, A WOMAN AND TWO MEN
*McCullers, THE BALLAD OF THE SAD CAFE
*Mailer, ADVERTISEMENTS FOR MYSELF
    (esp. "The Time of Her Time")
    AN AMERICAN DREAM
    THE DEER PARK
Meredith, DIANA OF THE CROSSWAYS
    THE EGOIST
*Milford, ZELDA
*Miller, TROPIC OF CANCER
    TROPIC OF CAPRICORN
Montherlant, THE CELIBATES
    EXILE
    THE MASTER OF SANTIAGO
    THE YOUNG GIRLS
*Nabokov, LOLITA
*K.A. Porter, THE OLD ORDER
    (esp. "The Jilting of Granny Wetherall")
Shakespeare, THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
Sophocles, ANTIGONE

*Stein, THREE LIVES
Strindberg, THE FATHER
  MISS JULIE
Thackeray, VANITY FAIR
Tolstoy, ANNA KARENINA
  THE KREUTZER SONATA
Voltaire, CANDIDE
*T. Williams, THE GLASS MENAGERIE
  A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
  SUMMER AND SMOKE
V. Woolf, MRS. DALLOWAY
Zola, NANA

(*denotes American author)

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN IN MODERN AMERICAN LITERATURE

LINDA J. TAYLOR
Brown University

SEMESTER II
1971-72

The course will be structured historically and deal primarily with novels, short stories, poetry and plays. Some effort will be made to discover prevalent images and stereotypes (the Genteel Lady, the Fallen Woman, the New England Spinster) and to compare them with what we know of the actual role and situation of the women of a particular period. We will also try to relate popular and not-so-popular ideas of womanhood to the changes in American social and moral values since the Civil War. Finally, we will try to see how they affect real life, both past and present.

GENERAL CRITICAL, HISTORICAL, and Sociological REFERENCES (Many of these are on reserve in the Humanities Reading Room of the Rockfeller Library under Modes of Thought [M.T.] 60.):

Page Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND (1970)
Caroline Bird, BORN FEMALE (1968)
Henry Steele Commager, THE AMERICAN MIND (1950)
Mary Ellmann, THINKING ABOUT WOMEN, (1968)
Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL (1960)
Betty Friedan, THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE (1963)
Ernest Groves, THE AMERICAN WOMAN (1940)
Aileen Kraditor, UP FROM THE PEDESTAL (1968)
Robert Jay Lifton, THE WOMAN IN AMERICA (1965)
Kate Millett, SEXUAL POLITICS (1969)
Robin Morgan, SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL (1970)
Robert E. Riegel, AMERICAN WOMEN (1970)
Anne Firor Scott, THE AMERICAN WOMAN: WHO WAS SHE? (1971)
Andrew Sinclair, THE EMANCIPATION OF THE AMERICAN WOMAN (1965), WOMEN IN AMERICAN LIFE (1970)
William Wasserstrom, HEIRESS OF ALL THE AGES (1959)
Germaine Greer, THE FEMALE EUNUCH (1971)

*TOPICS FOR READING AND DISCUSSION (*indicates a required work)

*February 10 I. Introduction and Romantic and Sentimental Backgrounds (or The Genteel Tradition) (Pre-Civil War)

*Susanna Rowson, CHARLOTTE TEMPLE (1794)
Edgar Allan Poe, COMPLETE POEMS
Harriet Beecher Stowe, UNCLE TOM'S CABIN (1852)
Louisa May Alcott, LITTLE WOMEN (1868)

Clifton Furness, THE GENTEEL FEMALE (1931)
Herbert Brown, THE SENTIMENTAL NOVEL IN AMERICA: 1789-1860
William R. Taylor, CAVALIER AND YANKEE (1961)
David B. Davis, ANTE-BELLUM REFORM (1967)
Lucy Larcom, A NEW ENGLAND GIRLHOOD (1889)
Nathaniel Hawthorne, THE SCARLET LETTER (1850)
THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE (1852)
Maria J. McIntosh, WOMAN IN AMERICA (1850)
William G. Eliot Jr., LECTURES TO YOUNG WOMEN (1854)

February 24 II. The Rise of American Realism in the Gilded Age (or "the new American Girl") (Post-Civil War)

*Henry James, DAISY MILLER (1879)
,THE BOSTONIANS (1886)
*William Dean Howells, THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM (1885)
*Mary Wilkins Freeman, "A New England Nun," (& other stories) (1881)
JULIA NEWBERRY'S DIARY (1869-1876)
Robert Falk, THE VICTORIAN MODE IN AMERICAN FICTION: 1865-1885
Abba Gould Woolson, WOMAN IN AMERICAN SOCIETY (1873)
MODERN WOMEN (AND WHAT IS SAID OF THEM) (1868)
LADIES HOME JOURNAL (1890)
Thorstein Veblen, THE THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS (1899)

March 2 III. Naturalism and Social Change (or Breaking the Genteel Tradition)
March 9 (The '90's and the Turn of the Century)

*Stephen Crane, MAGGIE, A GIRL OF THE STREETS (1893)
Harold Frederic, THE DAMNATION OF THERON WARE (1896)
*Theodore Dreiser, SISTER CARRIE (1900)
JENNIE GERHARDT (1911)
DIFFERENT GIRLS (Harper's Novelettes)
THEIR HUSBANDS' WIVES (Harper's Novelettes)
Richard Hofstadter, SOCIAL DARWINISM IN AMERICAN THOUGHT (1944)
Lilian Bell, FROM A GIRL'S POINT OF VIEW (1897)
Annie Nathan Meyer, WOMAN'S WORK IN AMERICA (1891)
Jacob Riis, HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES (1890)

March 16 IV. Return to realism, East and West (or the End of an Era) (through World War I)

*Edith Wharton, THE HOUSE OF MIRTH (1905)
Willa Cather, MY ANTONIA (1918)
*Sinclair Lewis, MAIN STREET (1920)
Anne Morgan, THE AMERICAN GIRL (1915)
Ellen Kay, THE RENAISSANCE OF MOTHERHOOD (1914)
Henry F. May, THE END OF AMERICAN INNOCENCE (1959)
Ida Tarbell, THE BUSINESS OF BEING A WOMAN (1912)

March 30 V. The Lost Generation (or "Flapper," Lover, and Bitch-Goddess) (the '20's and '30's)

*F. Scott Fitzgerald, TENDER IS THE NIGHT (1934)
THE GREAT GATSBY (1925)

*Ernest Hemingway, SHORT STORIES
THE SUN ALSO RISES (1926)
William Faulkner, SANCTUARY (1931)
LIGHT IN AUGUST (1932)
Nathanael West, THE DAY OF THE LOCUST (1939)
H.L. Mencken, IN DEFENSE OF WOMEN (1922, 1925)
Frederick Lewis Allen, ONLY YESTERDAY (1931) - Ch 5
Robert S. Lynd, MIDDLETOWN (1929)
Nancy Milford, ZELDA (1971)
Samuel D. Schmalhausen & V.F. Calverton, WOMAN'S COMING OF AGE (1931)

April 20 VI. Southern Re-evaluations (or the Evolution of the Belle)
April 27

*William Faulkner, THE SOUND AND THE FURY (1929, 1946)
Margaret Mitchell, GONE WITH THE WIND (1936)
William R. Taylor, CALVALIER AND YANKEE (1961)
Mary Boykin Chesnut, A DIARY FROM DIXIE (1861-1865)
*Tennessee Williams, A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE (1947)
Eldridge Cleaver, SOUL ON ICE (1968)
Anne Firor Scott, THE SOUTHERN LADY (1970)

May 4 VII. "Mom" Revisited (or Woman as Aggressor) Conclusions

*Wright Morris, "The Ram in the Thicket," (1951)
*Edward Albee, WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? (1962)
*LeRoi Jones, DUTCHMAN (1964)
Philip Roth, PORTNOY'S COMPLAINT (1967)
Philip Wylie, GENERATION OF VIPERS (1942, 1968)
Morton M. Hunt, HER INFINITE VARIETY (1962)

CHAPTER FOUR

ON BEING MALE AND TEACHING WOMEN'S HISTORY

ALLEN F. DAVIS
Temple University
History
Fall, 1972

I am teaching a course in women's history this semester at Temple University for a number of reasons. There seemed to be no woman in the department willing to teach such a course, and I wanted to illustrate the need for courses in the area of women's studies. I was also interested because my research and writing have for years dealt with women (as well as men) in American History.

My first thought was to teach the course as an undergraduate seminar, but before I realized it, forty people had signed up for it, filling the room assigned to me. This in itself is an indication of the demand for women's courses, for Betty Friedan is a visiting lecturer on the campus this semester teaching a course with a title similar to mine. I was listed in the catalogue as "A. Davis." I don't think most students expected Angela, but it was obvious when I walked in the first day that most of them expected a woman teacher. I had decided long before starting the course that I would not pretend that I was an authority on women, and that I would not lecture, at least in the beginning. I'm now about six weeks into the course and I haven't yet lectured, except one day to talk for about twenty minutes about Margaret Fuller, and on another occasion to read a portion of my completed book on Jane Addams and to get some good criticism on the way I handled Jane Addams' relationship with other women.

We are reading Gerda Lerner's THE WOMAN IN AMERICAN HISTORY, in some ways a disappointing book, but it fills students in quickly on a number of names and movements and ideas that even the most commited feminists know little about. We also are reading William O'Neill's EVERYONE WAS BRAVE, which is, of course, the story of the woman's movement rather than the story of women's role in history. Barbara Welter's "The Cult of True Womanhood" stimulated some lively discussion. We are also using Anne Scott's anthology, THE AMERICAN WOMAN: WHO IS SHE? and Robin Morgan's collection, SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL. In addition, every student is reading at least one other book, usually a biography or autobiography, and each student is doing a major project. Some are doing traditional papers on prostitution, working women in Philadelphia, the image of women in the short fiction of the LADIES HOME JOURNAL, but others are doing slide or tape presentations and two students are writing a play. Every student who could has interviewed her mother and grandmother, or someone of their generations, and we have had lively discussions about roles and attitudes of women in different generations.

The original forty students in the class consisted of thirty-seven women and three men. I let five additional people into the course (four women and one man). There are four or five women in their thirties or older who are married or have been married, and who have children. There are four black women, and for a time they felt uncomfortable, claiming that most of our discussion was about the upper-middle-class white women. In fact, one of the black women threatened to leave and we had to convince her that her perspective offered a good corrective to the general experience of the class. Many of the students have dropped out of school for a time or have held jobs before they went to school and many have changed colleges at least once. Several are deeply involved in the Women's Movement, and several are socialists; in fact, almost everyone in the class is there because she has a special commitment. The exceptions are the four men who are often strangely quiet, though one has become more vocal recently. Gradually I have been accepted as sympathetic to the cause, and the atmosphere in the class is generally relaxed, though the women occasionally catch me in a sexist remark.

Discussion is no problem. We usually extend beyond the class time. The problem is introducing any kind of historical dimension, for the tendency of most of the class is to focus immediately on the present and on their own experience. We have guest lecturers, some of my women graduate students, and visitors on campus. This week we are going to the Library Company to look at an exhibit on women, 1775-1865, and we may stop at the Philadelphia Academy where there is a John Sloan exhibit to see how he depicted women at different stages in his career. Students bring in items to talk about, and many friends drop in and take part in discussions. I have never taught a class where there is more a sense of commitment and community. Yet I am really not teaching the course, but providing an excuse and a rationale for forty-five people, mostly women, to explore the American past and present in a particular way.

It is possible, then, for a male to teach women's history, just as it is possible for a white to teach black history. There are problems, of course, but special rewards as well.

CHAPTER FIVE

WOMEN IN AMERICA

CARL N. DEGLER
Stanford University

History 263 (Undergraduate Colloquium)
Winter, 1971-72

You are urged to purchase the following paperback books, which will be read in their entirety. Books marked recommended at the Bookshop will be used to a large extent, but will not be read in their entirety. Copies of all books to be read in whole or in substantial part are also on reserve in the Undergraduate Library.

Cynthia F. Epstein and W.J. Goode, eds., THE OTHER HALF
Robert Smuts, WOMEN AND WORK IN AMERICA
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, WOMEN AND ECONOMICS
Kate Chopin, THE AWAKENING
Una Stannard, THE NEW PAMELA
Betty Friedan, THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE
Aileen Kraditor, THE IDEAS OF THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

January 5. Introductory and organizational meeting.

January 12. The Issue: The Nature of Prejudice Against Women.

Required Reading

Gordon Allport, THE NATURE OF PREJUDICE (paperback, abridged ed.) Chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, and 10.
Epstein and Goode, ed., pp. 33-54.
Judith M. Bardwich, THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN, Chaps. 2, 6, 7, 10.
Naomi Weisstein, " 'Kinde, Kuche, Kirche' as Scientific Law: Psychology Constructs the Female," in Robin Morgan, ed., SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL.
Erik Erikson, "Inner and Outer Space: Reflections on Womanhood," in Robert Jay Lifton, ed., THE WOMAN IN AMERICA.

Suggested Reading

Edwin C. Lewis, DEVELOPING WOMEN'S POTENTIAL, Chaps. 3 and 4.
Phyllis C. Jay, "The Female Primate," and Edmund Overstreet, "The Biological Makeup of Women," in Seymour M. Farber and Roger H.L. Wilson, eds., THE POTENTIAL OF WOMAN.
Eric Fromm, "Sex and Character" in his DOGMA OF CHRIST.
E.E. Evans-Pritchard, THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES. AND OTHER ESSAYS IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY, Chap. II.
Eleanor Maccoby, ed., DEVELOPMENT OF SEX DIFFERENCES (1966) contains excellent annotated and classified bibliography, pp. 223-321.

January 19. The Roots of Prejudice Against Women

Required

Epstein and Goode, ed., pp. 55-61.

H.R. Hays, THE DANGEROUS SEX, Chaps. 1-5, 8, 14: 15.
Wolfgang Lederer, THE FEAR OF WOMEN, Chaps. 23-9.
Lester Frank Ward, DYNAMIC SOCIOLOGY, I, pp. 605-10; 640-63.
Bruno Bettelheim, SYMBOLIC WOUNDS, Chapters entitled "The Secret o Men," "Girls' Rites," and "The Biological Antithesis."

Suggested
Karen Horney, FEMININE PSYCHOLOGY, particularly chapter on "The Dread of Women."
Edward M. Bracher, THE SEX RESEARCHERS, pp. 218-30
Mary Jane Sherfey, "The Evolution and Nature of Female Sexuality in Relation to Psychoanalytical Theory," JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOANALYTICAL ASSOCIATION, 14 (1966), pp. 28-128.

January 26. Women's Rights: Suffrage

Required
Aileen Kraditor, THE IDEAS OF THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT.
Eleanor Flexner, A CENTURY OF STRUGGLE, Chaps. 19-23.

Suggested
Alan Grimes, THE PURITAN ETHIC AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

February 2. Women's Rights: Beyond the Suffrage.

Required
Epstein and Goode, eds., pp. 7-32.
William L. O'Neill, EVERYONE WAS BRAVE, Chaps. 1, 2, 4, 10.
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, WOMAN AND ECONOMICS.
Carl N. Degler, "Revolution Without Ideology, " In Robert Jay Lifton, ed., WOMEN IN AMERICA.

Suggested
Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE, Chaps. 8, 13, 15, 17.
Andrew Sinclair, THE BETTER HALF.

February 9. Women's Economic Place.

Required
Robert Smuts, WOMEN AND WORK IN AMERICA.
Epstein and Goode, eds., Chap. 3.
Edward Gross, "Plus ça change...? The Sexual Structure of Occupations Over Time" SOCIAL PROBLEMS, 16 (Fall 1968), pp. 198-208.
Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE, Chaps. 9, 14, 18.

Suggested
Juanita Kreps, SEX IN THE MARKETPLACE: AMERICAN WOMEN AT WORK
Esther Peterson, "Working Women," in R.J. Lifton, ed., WOMEN IN AMERICA.

February 16. Woman on Woman.

Required
Una Stannard, THE NEW PAMELA
Kate Chopin, THE AWAKENING

Suggested
Helen Papshvily, ALL THE HAPPY ENDINGS.

Per Seyersted, KATE CHOPIN.
Kate Millett, SEXUAL POLITICS.
Leslie A. Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL (rev. ed.), Chaps. 4 and 10.

February 23. Woman as Nigger.

Required
Betty Friedan, FEMININE MYSTIQUE.
Gunnar Myrdal, AN AMERICAN DILEMMA, II, Appendix 5.

Suggested
Caroline Bird, BORN FEMALE.

Helen Hacker, "Women as a Minority Group," SOCIAL FORCES, 30 (October 1951), pp. 60-69.
Ronald V. Sampson, THE PSYCHOLOGY OF POWER, Chap. 3; *n.b.* Part iv.
Elizabeth Janeway, MAN'S WORLD, WOMAN's PLACE, Chap. 9.
Gayle Rubin, "Woman as Nigger," in B. and T. Roszak, eds., MASCULINE/FEMININE, READINGS IN SEXUAL MYTHOLOGY AND THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN.

March 1. Alternative Social Experiences: USSR, Sweden, and Israel.

Required
Epstein and Goode, eds., Chapt. 4.
Bruno Bettelheim, CHILDREN OF THE DREAM, Chap. I, and pp. 246-48.
Norton D. Dodge, WOMEN IN THE SOVIET ECONOMY, Chaps. 4, 5, 12.
Anna-Greta Leijon, SWEDISH WOMEN — SWEDISH MEN, Chaps 2-7.

Suggested
Edmund Dahlstrone, ed., THE CHANGING ROLE OF MEN AND WOMEN.

March 8. The Development of Feminine Ideology and the Effect Upon [illegible]

Required
Epstein and Goode, eds., pp. 165-207.
Shulamith Firestone, THE DIALECTIC OF SEX, Chaps. 1-4, and pp. 226-42.
Hendrik M. Ruitenbeek, THE MALE MYTH, Chap. VII, "The Emasculation of the American Male: Aspects of Sexuality."

Suggested
Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, MODERN WOMAN: THE LOST SEX.
Germaine Greer, THE FEMALE EUNUCH.
Robin Morgan, ed., SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL, Part IV, "Up From Sexism."

CHAPTER SIX

WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY

ELLEN MALINO JAMES
New School for Social Research

Social History
1972

THE COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING LIST

This new field of social history, conceived in its broadest sense, encompasses a vast literature. Books of varying quality and perspective are published, and reissued, almost daily! We shall try to keep up with them. No polemics or rap sessions. No consciousness-raising, except in the realization that ideology in America is extraordinarily resistant to change; and not simply on the question of new roles for women outside the traditional sphere of activities, although that will be our main concern.

If any theme emerges in this survey of three centuries of social and political reform, it is that women as a minority group were isolated from the mainstream of social and political life. While the activists choose to support unpopular causes and issues, the less visible and less articulate conformed to the values defined as "Woman's Place." Throughout, the emphasis of this course will be on a consideration of American women at specific points in the historical development of institutions.

This, then, is not a history of the woman's movement. Indeed, it is anachronistic to suggest that there was a monolithic progression toward liberation; or that all women who played a significant role in public life were conscious of being oppressed as women. Feminism will be examined as a topic only during those periods when the movement impinged on the social and political development of the nation.

Students registered for credit will meet after the second session to discuss details of the term paper and examination requirements. The reading lists which follow furnish suggestions for subjects to explore.

REQUIRED

One or two of the following general surveys should be purchased, according to your preference and convenience, and read along with the topic for each week when applicable. (p equal paperback)

Eleanor Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE (p)
Aileen S. Kraditor, ed., UP FROM THE PEDESTAL (p)
Gerda Lerner, THE WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY (p)
William O'Neill, EVERYONE WAS BRAVE (p)
William O'Neill, ed., THE WOMAN MOVEMENT (p)
Robert E. Riegel, AMERICAN WOMEN
Roberta Salper, ed., FEMALE LIBERATION (p)
Miriam Schneir, ed., FEMINISM (p)

Anne Firor Scott, ed., THE AMERICAN WOMAN: WHO WAS SHE? (p)
Andrew Sinclair, THE EMANCIPATION OF THE AMERICAN WOMAN (p)
Page Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND (p)
June Sochen, ed., THE NEW FEMINISM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (p)
Leslie B. Tanner, VOICES FROM WOMEN'S LIBERATION (p)
Alice Rossi, ed., ESSENTIAL WORKS OF FEMINISM (p) [forthcoming]

For individual women, consult on the Reference Shelf of the New School Library NOTABLE AMERICAN WOMEN: 1607-1950, 3 volumes, edited by Edward T. James and Janet Wilson James.

TOPICAL READING LIST

Reading listed under topics for each week are suggested, not required. Primary sources are emphasized here, although some are more accessible than others. (For secondary sources, refer to the supplementary reading list which follows.)

I. Introduction: Colonial New England

Cotton Mather, ORNAMENTS FOR THE DAUGHTERS OF ZION
Edmund Morgan, THE PURITAN FAMILY (p)
John Winthrop, JOURNAL, ed. James Kendall Hosmer

II. After the Revolution: the Unfree Majority

NEW LETTERS OF ABIGAIL ADAMS, ed. Stewart Mitchell
Alexis de Toqueville, DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA, II (p)
Mary Wollstonecraft, VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN

III. Gentility and Domesticity in the Early Republic

Frances Wright, VIEWS OF SOCIETY AND MANNERS IN AMERICA, ed. Paul Baker
Margaret Fuller, WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
GODEY'S MAGAZINE AND LADY'S BOOK
Harriet Martineau, SOCIETY IN AMERICA
Frances Trollope, DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS
Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," AMERICAN QUARTERLY, 18 (1966), pp 151-74.

IV. Feminism and Anti-Slavery

G.H. Barnes and D.W. Dumond, eds., LETTERS OF THEODORE DWIGHT WELD, ANGELINA GRIMKE WELD, AND SARAH GRIMKE
Annie Fields, ed., HARRIET BEECHER STOWE: LIFE AND LETTERS
Frances Anne Kemble, JOURNAL OF A RESIDENCE ON A GEORGIAN PLANTATION, ed. John A. Scott
Alice S. Rossi, ed., ESSAYS ON SEX EQUALITY, by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor; or John Stuart Mill, THE SUBJECTION OF WOMEN, ed. Wendall Robert Carr (p)
Seneca Falls Convention, DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS

V. Victorian Conservators

Madame Blanc, THE CONDITION OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

Henry Adams, DEMOCRACY
James Bryce, THE AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH, II (p)
Kate Chopin, THE AWAKENING
Leon Edel, ed., THE DIARY OF ALICE JAMES
Thorstein Veblen, THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS (p)
Frances Willard, WOMAN AND TEMPERANCE or GLIMPSES OF FIFTY YEARS

VI. Progressive Reformers

Jane Addams, TWENTY YEARS AT HULL HOUSE or DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL ETHICS (p)
Sophinisba Breckinridge, WOMEN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
Lillian Wald, THE HOUSE ON HENRY STREET or WINDOWS ON HENRY STREET

VII. Women and Work

Edith Abbott, WOMEN IN INDUSTRY
Mary Anderson, WOMAN AT WORK: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARY ANDERSON as told to Mary N. Winslow
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, WOMEN AND ECONOMICS, ed. Carl Degler; or THE LIVING OF CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN (p)
Alice Henry, THE TRADE UNION WOMAN or WOMEN AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT
Florence Kelley, MODERN INDUSTRY IN RELATION TO THE FAMILY, HEALTH, EDUCATION, MORALITY
Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, SABOTAGE or LIFE AND LABOR
William O'Neill, ed., WOMEN AT WORK (p)
Ida Tarbell, ALL IN A DAY'S WORK or THE BUSINESS OF BEING A WOMAN
Marie and Bessie Van Vorst, THE WOMAN WHO TOILS

VIII. Suffrage Crusade and War Years

Jane Addams, PEACE AND BREAD IN TIME OF WAR
Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mathilda Gage, Ida H. Harper, HISTORY OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE, 6 volumes
Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie R. Shuler, WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND POLITICS
Harriot Stanton Blatch, THE MOBILIZATION OF WOMAN POWER
Aileen S. Kraditor, IDEAS OF THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT: 1890-1920 (p)
David Morgan, SUFFRAGISTS AND DEMOCRATS: THE POLITICS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN AMERICA
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, EIGHTY YEARS AND MORE: REMINISCENCES, 1815-1897 (p)
WOODHULL AND CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY

IX. New Directions in the Twenties

Jane Addams, THE NEWER IDEALS OF PEACE
Sylvia Beach, SHAKESPEARE AND COMPANY
Isadora Duncan, MY LIFE
Margaret Sanger, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

X. Radicals and Professionals

Floyd Dell, WOMEN AS WORLD BUILDERS: STUDIES IN MODERN FEMINISM
Max Eastman, GREAT COMPANIONS
Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, I SPEAK BY OWN PIECE
Emma Goldman, LIVING MY LIFE or ANARCHISM AND OTHER ESSAYS

XI. Depression as a Liberation Force

Persia Campbell, CONSUMER REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW DEAL
Jane deHart Matthews, THE FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT (p)
Frances Perkins, THE ROOSEVELT I KNEW (p)
Eleanor Roosevelt, AUTOBIOGRAPHY (p)
Eleanor Roosevelt and Lorena A. Hickok, LADIES OF COURAGE

XII. Return to Family

Carl N. Degler, "Revolution Without Ideology: The Changing Place of Women in America," The Woman in America, DAEDALUS, 93 (Spring 1964), pp. 653-70, and *passim*.
Betty Friedan, THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE (p)
President's Commission on the Status of Women, AMERICAN WOMEN (orig. 1963; Introduction by Margaret Mead, 1965 edition)

XIII. Contemporary Dilemma

Simone de Beauvoir, THE SECOND SEX (p)
Caroline Bird, BORN FEMALE (p)
Eve Merriam, AFTER NORA SLAMMED THE DOOR

XIV. The Black Woman

Andrew Billingsley, BLACK FAMILIES IN WHITE AMERICA
Toni Cade, ed., THE BLACK WOMAN (p)
Josephine Carson, SILENT VOICES: THE SOUTHERN NEGRO
Sylvia G. Dannett, PROFILES OF NEGRO WOMANHOOD, 2 volumes
E. Franklin Frazier, THE NEGRO FAMILY IN THE UNITED STATES
Gerda Lerner, ed., BLACK WOMEN IN WHITE AMERICA: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY (p)
Moynihan Report, THE NEGRO FAMILY: THE CASE FOR NATIONAL ACTION

XV. Search for New Identities

Leo Kanowitz, WOMEN AND THE LAW: THE UNFINISHED REVOLUTION
Robin Morgan, ed., SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL (p)
Mary Lou Thompson, ed., VOICES OF THE NEW FEMINISM...

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SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST

SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST, consisting mainly of secondary works, is divided into four sections. *Section 1* covers general works of history which include references to women. Use the chapters or index as a guide to your particular field of historical interest. *Section 2* consists of biography, autobiography, reminiscences of the life-and-times variety, and histories of particular organizations and movements usually written by the participants. *Section 3* offers a selection of "woman's problem" books published before the late 1950's of varying insight and point of view. *Section 4* deals with both scholarly and popular treatments of the woman in America published during the last decade. These works, written from the perspective of disciplines other than history, such as sociology, literature, psychology, economics, education, and journalism, present a wide range of quality, rhetoric, and objectivity. Your comments, suggestions, and additions are always welcome!

Frederick Lewis Allen, ONLY YESTERDAY
John B. Andrews and W.D.P. Bliss, HISTORY OF WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS
Herbert Aptheker, ed., DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE NEGRO PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES
Leonard J. Arrington, GREAT BASIN KINGDOM
Bernard Bailyn, EDUCATION IN THE FORMING OF AMERICAN SOCIETY
Gilbert H. Barnes, THE ANTISLAVERY IMPLUSE: 1830-1844
Mary S. Benson, WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AMERICA
Arthur E. Bestor, BACKWARDS UTOPIAS; EDUCATION AND REFORM AT NEW HARMONY
Caroline Bird, THE INVISIBLE SCAR
Daniel J. Boorstin, THE AMERICANS: THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE
Benjamin A. Botkin, LAY MY BURDEN DOWN
Robert H. Bremner, FROM THE DEPTHS: THE DISCOVERY OF POVERTY IN THE UNITED STATES
Paul Brissenden, EARNINGS OF FACTORY WORKERS: 1899-1927
Van Wyck Brooks, THE CONFIDENT YEARS
Frank J. Bruno, TRENDS IN SOCIAL WORK
Vern Bullough, THE HISTORY OF PROSTITUTION
Arthur Calhoun, A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY, 3 vol.
Victoria Case and Robert O. Case, WE CALLED IT CULTURE
David M. Chalmers, THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDEAS OF THE MUCKRAKERS
Clarke Chambers, SEEDTIME OF REFORM; PAUL U. KELLOGG AND THE SURVEY
Henry Steele Commager, THE AMERICAN MIND
John R. Commons, et. al., HISTORY OF LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES
Lawrence A. Cremin, AMERICAN EDUCATION: THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE
Whitney R. Cross, THE BURNED-OVER DISTRICT
Merle Curti, THE GROWTH OF AMERICAN THOUGHT
Allen F. Davis, SPEARHEADS FOR REFORM: THE SOCIAL SETTLEMENTS AND THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT: 1890-1914
David B. Davis, ed., ANTE-BELLUM REFORM
Elisabeth W. Anthony Dexter, COLONIAL WOMEN OF AFFAIRS
Carl Degler, OUT OF OUR PAST
John Demos, A LITTLE COMMONWEALTH: FAMILY LIFE IN PLYMOUTH COLONY
Bernard DeVoto, FORAYS AND REBUTTALS
David Donald, LINCOLN RECONSIDERED
Thomas E. Drake, QUAKERS AND SLAVERY IN AMERICA

Theodore Draper, THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM
Melvin Dubofsky, WE SHALL BE ALL: A HISTORY OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD
Dwight Dumond, ANTI-SLAVERY ORIGINS OF THE CIVIL WAR; ANTI-SLAVERY: THE CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM IN AMERICA
Stanley M. Elkins, SLAVERY: A PROBLEM IN AMERICAN INSTITUTIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE
Elmer Ellis, MR. DOOLEY'S AMERICA
Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL
Louis Filler, THE CRUSADE AGAINST SLAVERY; CRUSADERS FOR AMERICAN LIBERALISM
G. Allen Foster, VOTES FOR WOMEN
Ray Ginger, THE BENDING CROSS; ALTBELD'S AMERICA
Willystine Goodsell, A HISTORY OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY
Eric Goldman, RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY
Otis Graham, AN ENCORE FOR REFORM: THE OLD PROGRESSIVES AND THE NEW DEAL
Alan Grimes, THE PURITAN ETHIC AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE
Gerald N. Grob, WORKERS AND UTOPIA
Joseph R. Gusfield, SYMBOLIC CRUSADE: STATUS POLITICS AND THE AMERICAN TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT
Nathan G. Hale, Jr., FREUD AND THE AMERICANS
Norman Hapgood, PROFESSIONAL PATRIOTS
Christopher Lasch, THE NEW RADICALISM IN AMERICA: 1889-1963
Margaret Leech, REVEILLE IN WASHINGTON
Max Lerner, AMERICA AS A CIVILIZATION
Daniel Levine, VARIETIES OF REFORM THOUGHT
Leon Litwack, NORTH OF SLAVERY: THE NEGRO IN THE FREE STATES, 1790-1860
Rayford W. Logan, THE NEGRO IN AMERICAN LIFE AND THOUGHT
Roy Lubove, THE PROFESSIONAL ALTRUIST: THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL WORK AS A CAREER
Arthur Mann, YANKEE REFORMERS IN THE URBAN AGE
Mary Elizabeth Massey, BONNET BRIGADES
Henry F. May, THE END OF AMERICAN INNOCENCE
James McPherson, THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY
Perry Miller, THE NEW ENGLAND MIND
Edmund Morgan, VIRGINIANS AT HOME
Richard Morris, GOVERNMENT AND LABOR IN EARLY AMERICA
George Mowry, THE URBAN NATION
Allen Nevins, THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN AMERICA
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Russel B. Nye, FETTERED FREEDOM
William O'Neill, ECHOES OF REVOLT; DIVORCE IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA
Helen W. Papashvily, ALL THE HAPPY ENDINGS
Vernon Parrington, MAIN CURRENTS IN AMERICAN THOUGHT
R.E. Paulson, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL CONTROL
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Ralph and Muriel Pumphrey, THE HERITAGE OF AMERICAN SOCIAL WORK
Howard Quint, THE FORGING OF AMERICAN SOCIALISM
Robert Riegel, AMERICAN FEMINISTS

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Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., THE AGE OF JACKSON
Anne Firor Scott, THE SOUTHERN LADY: FROM PEDESTAL TO POLITICS, 1830-1936
Gilbert Seldes, THE STAMMERING CENTURY
John Serjamaki, THE AMERICAN FAMILY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
Samuel Sillen, WOMEN AGAINST SLAVERY
Francis Simkins and J.W. Patton, THE WOMEN OF THE CONFEDERACY
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Julia Spruill, WOMEN'S LIFE AND WORK IN THE SOUTHERN COLONIES
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Daisy Bates, THE LONG SHADOW OF LITTLE ROCK
Emery Battis, SAINTS AND SECRETARIES
Ruth M. Baylor, ELIZABETH PALMER PEABODY: KINDERGARTEN PIONEER
August Bebel: WOMAN UNDER SOCIALISM
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Emily N. Blair, THE WOMAN'S COMMITTEE, U.S. COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
Dorothy Rose Blumberg, FLORENCE KELLEY: THE MAKING OF A SOCIAL PIONEER
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Sarah H. Bradford, HARRIET TUBMAN: THE MOSES OF HER PEOPLE
Fawn M. Brodie, THADDEAUS STEVENS: SCOURGE OF THE SOUTH
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Earl Conrad, HARRIET TUBMAN
Otelia Cromwell, LUCRETIA MOTT
Dorothy Day, THE LONG LONELINESS
Marie Louise Degen, HISTORY OF THE WOMAN'S PEACE PARTY
Floyd Dell, HOMECOMING
Rheta Child Dorr, SUSAN B. ANTHONY; A WOMAN OF FIFTY
Emily Taft Douglas, MARGARET SANGER
Mary Dreier, MARGARET DREIER ROBINS: HER LIFE, LETTERS, AND WORK
Richard Drinnon, REBEL IN PARADISE: EMMA GOLDMAN
Robert L. Duffus, LILLIAN WALD: ANGEL OF HENRY STREET
Abigail Scott Duniway, PATH-BREAKING
Mary Earhart, FRANCES WILLARD: FROM PRAYERS TO POLITICS
Max Eastman, ENJOYMENT OF LIVING; LOVE AND REVOLUTION
Tilden G. Edelstein, STRANGE ENTHUSIASM: A LIFE OF THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON
Arthur H. Fauset, SOJOURNER TRUTH
Edith Finch, CAREY THOMAS OF BRYN MAWR
Ruth Finley, THE LADY OF GODEY'S
Betty Fladeland, JAMES GILLESPIE BIRNEY: SLAVEHOLDER TO ABOLITIONIST
Charles Neilson Gattey, THE BLOOMER GIRLS
Margaret George, ONE WOMAN'S SITUATION: A STUDY OF MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT
Josephine Goldmark, IMPATIENT CRUSADER: FLORENCE KELLEY'S LIFE STORY
Miriam Gurko, RESTLESS SPIRIT (Edna St. Vincent Millay)
Helen Hall, CASE STUDIES OF UNEMPLOYMENT
Alice Hamilton, EXPLORING THE DANGEROUS TRADES
Ida Husted Harper, ed., THE LIFE AND WORK OF SUSAN B. ANTHONY
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Anna Arnold Hedgeman, THE TRUMPET SOUNDS: A MEMOIR OF NEGRO LEADERSHIP
Paxton Hibben, HENRY WARD BEECHER
Rackham Holt, MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE
Florence Howe Hull, ed., JULIA WARD HOWE AND THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Inez Haynes Irwin, THE STORY OF THE WOMAN'S PARTY
Julia W. Johnsen, JANE ADDAMS AND THE LIBERAL TRADITION
Johanna Johnston, MRS. SATAN—VICTORIA WOODHULL
Katharine W. Jones, HEROINES OF DIXIE
Hannah Josephson, GOLDEN THREADS
David Kennedy, BIRTH CONTROL IN AMERICA: THE CAREER OF MARGARET SANGER
Ralph Krongold, TWO FRIENDS OF MAN: WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON AND WENDELL PHILLIPS
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Christopher Lasch, ed., THE SOCIAL THOUGHT OF JANE ADDAMS
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Gerda Lerner, THE GRIMKE SISTERS OF SOUTH CAROLINA
Louise Levin, THE WOMEN'S GARMENT WORKERS UNION
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Alma Lutz, CREATED EQUAL; CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM; SUSAN B. ANTHONY
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Maud Nathan, THE STORY OF AN EPOCH-MAKING MOVEMENT; ONCE UPON A TIME AND TODAY
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Allan Nevins, ed., THE DIARY OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS: 1794-1845
Louise R. Noun, STRONG-MINDED WOMEN: EMERGENCE OF THE WOMAN-SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT
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Mabel R. Putnam, WINNING OF THE FIRST BILL OF RIGHTS FOR AMERICAN WOMEN
Mercedes M. Randall, IMPROPER BOSTONIAN: EMILY GREENE BALCH
Margaret E. Rich, A BELIEF IN PEOPLE
Mary Richmond, THE LONG VIEW
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Mary Church Terrell, A COLORED WOMAN IN A WHITE WORLD
Louise Hall Tharp, THREE SAINTS AND A SINNER
Benjamin P. Thomas, THEODORE WELD
Margaret Farrand Thorp, FEMALE PERSUASION
Helen E. Tyler, WHERE PRAYER AND PURPOSE MEET
Mason Wade, MARGARET FULLER
Ralph M. Wardle, MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT
William Waterman, FRANCES WRIGHT
Anna Mary Wells, DEAR PRECEPTOR
F.E. Willard and M.A. Livermore, eds., A WOMAN OF THE CENTURY
Ben Ames Williams, ed., MARY BOYKIN CHESTNUT: A DIARY FROM DIXIE
Dorothy Clarke Wilson, LONE WOMAN: ELIZABETH BLACKWELL
Forrest Willson, CRUSADER IN CRINOLINE
Harold E. Wilson, MARY McDOWELL: NEIGHBOR
Helen Wright, SWEEPER IN THE SKY

Section 3: Pre-1950s discussion of the "woman problem"

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Edith DeRaham, LOVE FRAUD
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Wainwright Evans, THE COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE
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Lillian Gilbreth, THE HOMEMAKER AND HER JOB
Ernest R. Groves, THE AMERICAN WOMAN
Karen Horney, FEMININE PSYCHOLOGY
Viola Klein, THE FEMININE CHARACTER: HISTORY OF AN IDEOLOGY
Viola Klein and Alva Myrdal, WOMEN'S TWO ROLES: HOME AND WORK
Hilda S. Krech, THE MANY LIVES OF MODERN WOMAN
Walter Lippmann, DRIFT AND MASTERY
Sophie Simon Loeb, EPIGRAMS FOR EVE

Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, MODERN WOMAN, THE LOST SEX
Margaret Mead, MALE AND FEMALE
H.L. Mencken, IN DEFENSE OF WOMEN
Kate Hevner Mueller, EDUCATING WOMEN FOR A MODERN WORLD
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Anais Nin, THE DIARY OF . . .
Lorin Pruett, WOMEN AND LEISURE
Marion K. Sanders, THE LADY AND THE VOTE
Robert Smuts, WOMEN AND WORK IN AMERICA
Mary White Wells, UNITY IN DIVERSITY
Virginia Woolf, A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN
Philip Wylie, GENERATION OF VIPERS

Section 4: American Women in the Sixties and Seventies

Helen S. Astin, THE WOMAN DOCTORATE IN AMERICA
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Elizabeth Gould Davis, THE FIRST SEX
Karen DeCrow, THE YOUNG WOMAN'S GUIDE TO LIBERATION
Midge Decter, THE LIBERATED WOMAN AND OTHER AMERICANS
Barbara Lee Diamonstein, OPEN SECRETS
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Cynthia Epstein, WOMAN'S PLACE
Margaret Sittler Ermarth, ADAM'S FRACTURED RIB
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Shulamith Firestone, THE DIALECTIC OF SEX
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Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran, eds., WOMAN IN A SEXIST SOCIETY
Germaine Greer, THE FEMALE EUNUCH
Martin Gruberg, WOMAN IN AMERICAN POLITICS
Lisa Hobbs, LOVE AND LIBERATION
Lois W. Hoffman and F. Ivan Nye, THE EMPLOYED MOTHER IN AMERICA
Judith Hole and Ellen Levine, REBIRTH OF FEMINISM
Morton Hunt, HER INFINITE VARIETY
Elizabeth Janeway, MAN'S WORLD, WOMAN'S PLACE
Mirra Komarovsky, BLUE COLLAR MARRIAGE
Peggy Lamson, FEW ARE CHOSEN: THE AMERICAN WOMAN IN POLITICAL LIFE TODAY
Sandra McDermott, FEMALE SEXUALITY
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CHAPTER SEVEN

HISTORY OF WOMEN IN AMERICA: THREE GENERATIONS OF SELF-CONCEPTS

Residential College
Spring 1972
KATHRYN KISH SKLAR
University of Michigan

What follows represents a *group* effort compiled by the members of Kitty Sklar's History of Women in America course, with special thanks to Kathee Henning.

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Friedrich Engels, THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE
Eleanor Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE
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History of Women in America, taught by Kitty Sklar at the University of Michigan's Residential College in 1972, met in two lectures and two "study group" sessions a week. One of the study groups centered on collecting the life histories of women already known to the students in the course. The histories were collected in a sequence of three generations, the first being equivalent to the grandmothers of today's college student. What follows are excerpts from two typical histories and a summary and evaluation of that history-writing experience as written by various members of the course.

TWO SAMPLE HISTORIES

We uncovered some marvelous women. Here are two examples drawn at random. [Although lack of space prevented us from reproducing these histories in their entirety, we have tried to retain the sense of the whole and the most relevant episodes.—BC]

I

Sometime around 1898 the youngest of six children was born to Russian immigrant parents on their small homestead, in one of two large rooms back of a small grocery store, just on the outskirts of Omaha, Nebraska. None of the family is really quite sure just when "Missy" or Matilda was born. The parents wanted to conceal the fact that the three older children were all born in Russia and naturalized in 1895. Grandma, however, would swear it was not until 1910. Be that as it may, my maternal grandmother remembers those early years when the family was very poor and her mother would rise at 3:00 A.M. on washdays to get that done before she opened the store at 6:00 A.M. When "Missy" was very young, her oldest sister, Leone, left school to care for the younger children and an ailing mother. A few years later the second daughter, Rose, would also leave school after eighth grade, but this time to attend a commercial school for less than a year, and then marriage. Her third sister, Anne, would also drop out of school to work in a neighborhood dry goods store and contribute all her very small salary to the family. There were two brothers who helped with the family work, Morris and Art....

During the years when she was going to school, neighbors often harassed Grandma about her staying in school, telling her she ought to quit and take care of her mother. But her mother was insistent on her remaining in school, and she was the only one to finish high school among the children.

"Missy" did remain at home for ayear after school, helping with odd jobs at neighbors' to bring a little money. Then she decided at age 20 to run off and work as a Traveling Saleslady in the states of Iowa and Nebraska for the First National Motion Picture Corporation as one of the first film distributors and traveling saleswomen in the country....It was necessary to travel, often at night, by rail. Late at night, and often alone on the platform, Grandma would lock herself into the washroom until the train came. The last car was reserved for traveling salesmen often, and since a "lady" did not travel in such cars in those days, Grandma would climb aboard, and then lock herself in the washroom on board until she reached her destination....During those years Grandma bought herself a typewriter and taught herself to type. She took the Civil Service exam and qualified for secretarial work for the Bureau of Labor, Chicago office.

She would work there for more than ten years...But during this period Grandmother married, and in the second year my mother was born. One year later her husband was gone, and she continued to work during this period, living with her brother and raising my mother solely on her earnings. When the Depression came, my mother was of college age, and my grandmother was insistent that she attend the University of Illinois, despite severe hardships during those days....

When my mother had already had three kids, and a home in the suburbs, Grandma decided to remarry. Today she lives in Maryland with her husband in low-income housing, waiting for those social security checks and small dividends that come once a month....Grandma still feels that her near-poverty condition resulted from her lack of education and lack of opportunity since she had to drop out of school....

The saddest part of all of it, however, is that often Grandma thinks back and sighs out loud because she never really got a chance in life to do the things that *she* wanted to do. It seems so sad to me that woman in her mid-seventies is still leading an active life, has full charge of her mind and sensibilities, and still looks forward to the "next twenty" years when she may begin to lead the kind of life she has always wanted—a life of travel and painting, and perhaps even going back to school to get a formal education.

II

Crushing twisted steel and iron is, to the women in my family, a "man's business." Since 1905 my mother's family has been centered around the growth of a metals scrap yard; since 1905 there have been differentiated roles for men and women. Men worked in the Yard, women kept house. This is the story of Sarah, my grandmother. Both she and my mother now live conventional Jewish middle-class lives. Both have four children. Both are very warm, supportive women whose days revolve around their families. My mother claims total satisfaction with her life; my grandmother shows more ambivalence....

Sarah says she was born in Stabin, Poland in 1902. Other sources indicate the date is more likely about 1895. She had four brothers and sisters, all born in Poland, and all immigrants to the United States....When in the Old Country, my grandmother attended Hebrew School and taught herself Russian and Polish. Yiddish was her community idiom. "I liked to study, was hungry for an education, and did well in my studies," she says. Upon immigration in 1915 to New York City, she began to work in a blouse factory and attended night school to learn English. She went through the eighth grade, and even today studies elementary texts (and reads movie magazines) to "improve vocabulary...."

...In New York, she says, her model was Emma Goldman. "In time, however, I disagreed with her 'far out' ideas." What Sarah euphemistically terms "free lunch" (free love) did not mesh either with her religious background or desire for middle class respectability. Later idols were Eleanor Roosevelt ("who I considered one of the Great Women") and Golda Meir....

When she met George in about 1920, she married him. "I had no choice of career," she says. "I consider being a mother a career in itself. However, I soon did envy women who had careers because I worked very hard at home." Yet she adds, "I think the American woman has a very good life. In Poland the woman is denied many rights and privileges which many American women take for granted. In old Europe, women worked while the men studied. The woman brought up the children, carried the bundles, and sometimes even earned the living...."

Sarah believes "women have an equal social role to men." "I believe in equal pay for equal work," she says. "I think women may work, but believe a mother should bring up her own children. It is when children are growing up they need a mother's and father's love and guidance."

My grandmother has in the past said she was happy with her life. She has never worked since her marriage; she has primarily lived the role of full-time wife and mother. In response to my question, "Would you choose to live the same life again?" she said only, "God forbid."

COMMENTARY

In our women's history class we each wrote "histories" of our grandmothers, mothers, and peers. We, as women, were communicating with, and exploring the lives of, other women. We expected generational differences and, indeed, we found some, but we were struck, also, with the continuity and commonality of problems women specifically have to, or attempt to, resolve when they make their choices about marriage, work, a career, children, etc. Naturally some women defended life-styles which appeared to us as passive, parasitical, and demeaning. Yet other women in all three generations had attempted compromises and alterations of traditional roles. Some women expressed dissatisfaction, ranging from mild to rebellious, with their life-choices and the environment that molded them. Problems women face have been articulated more audibly in recent years by various advocates of Women's Liberation, but we found women have always been more or less conscious of what is expected of them traditionally and the price of deviation from the norm.

Curiously, this study opened up areas of communication between women—especially between mothers and daughters, many of whom began a more fruitful exchange than ever before. On the whole, older women began to appreciate better our points on the oppression of women as it related to themselves, and we in turn became sensitive to the forces on, and options open to, the older women who had already made their critical commitments to a life role.

Our study group decided to collect women's histories both to discover the experiences of women known to us and to gain some sense of the process involved in researching women's lives. Through personal involvement in the interviews and by the dynamics of relating these histories to the discussion group, this became a very exciting enterprise. Once the initial contacts were made, each woman was asked to convert her interview into a short paper which was made available to the entire group before discussion. The discussion group encouraged open participation and did not depend upon a "leader."

The initial experiences of our group dramatized the difficulities involved in uncovering the life histories of people who, consciously or unconsciously, underestimate their own importance. Many mothers expressed dismay that their daughter's tuition money was going into the study of women when it should be going into the pursuit of a man, and they were reluctant initially to cooperate with this "subversive" history writing. Sharing such experiences in the study group was educational in the fullest sense of awakening us to the complexity of our subject matter and discovering its relevance to our own lives. Gradually out of our individual difficulties and experiences we evolved some simple generalizations and saw into the intricacies of connections between any individual woman and the society she lives in.

Beginning with the life histories of our women, the group developed an analysis of women's self-conceptions, the options open to women, the changing role of women, and alternative relationships available to women. In formulating a project of such broad dimensions, the group was encouraged rather than discouraged by the very human quality and diversity of the lives studied. The only discouraging factor may have been the inability of many of us to project the human feeling and personal events disclosed in interviews onto the background of historical context in which it had occurred.

As the project progressed several other dimensions and limitations became apparent. Our reading of the first generational histories impressed us with the wide variety of life-styles chosen by the women. This variation was particularly striking because the sample was largely limited to women related to, or personal friends with, the current University of Michigan students, with all that that implies for socio-economic and cultural classifications.

Another selection process operated at the individual level to yield an interesting result. Many of the women chose as their subjects women who fulfilled their own expectations for a future life-style, or who served as models to our generation in their response to life situations. This produced a sample of predominantly married women. Furthermore, in the case of the first generation histories, women who were chosen as subjects were indeed exceptional, if not extraordinary, and in some degree successful, either through their careers or in their own personal lives. The distance of this generation from the present one encouraged a greater objectivity in our analysis of self-conceptions and options in life-styles, than the more sensitive and emotional area of mother-daughter relationships of the second generation histories. Perhaps the greatest difficulty to overcome in our analysis of the second generation was the understanding of the interplay between individual lives and this historical context.

In the third generation histories a further limitation was imposed on the selection process. We asked that women be chosen who have attempted new kinds of relationships, and new modes of organizing their lives in response to tradition pressures. The response was predominately histories of women experimenting with new relationships within marriage. The challenges they were offering to traditional marriages concerned the restructuring of male-female roles, with a far lesser emphasis on marriage or children as goals in themselves. The composite profile showed a woman who demanded that both persons share in the freedom outside the home (traditionally a male perogative), and share in the responsibilities and experiences inside the home (traditionally restricted to the female role). Our analysis of these relationships was restricted by the newness of the experiments. Only two couples had children, and there the question of responsibility had not been finally resolved. Further, many of the women had not as yet devised more than a temporary resolution to the conflict and compromise between work and personal relationships.

As we have stated, the excitement of collecting these histories derived from the analysis of the personal relationships disclosed, and the sense of history communicated through three generations of women. Analysis of our data has been continued by the class members long after the term was over, and some will participate in next year's course so that an even better sampling and more systematic compilation of histories can be made.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WOMEN AND AMERICAN SOCIETY: A STUDY ACROSS THREE CENTURIES (17TH, 18TH, & 19TH)

History 560
Fall, 1972
CARROLL SMITH-ROSENBERG
University of Pennsylvania

Sept. 12 WOMEN'S HISTORY: New Questions and New Answers: a discussion of perspectives and methods.
Sept. 14 WOMEN'S HISTORY (continued)
Readings: Jessie Bernard, "My Four Revolutions"
Matina Horner, "A Bright Woman is Caught in a Double Bind..." PSYCHOLOGY TODAY
(Xerox copies on reserve)
Sept. 19 THE EVOLUTION OF THE FAMILY and of WOMEN'S ROLE: Some European Perspectives. Women from Charlemagne to Elizabeth Tudor.
Sept. 26 WOMEN IN 17th AND 18th CENTURY ENGLAND: Roles, Laws, and Models.
Oct. 3 WOMEN MOVE TO AMERICA: Troubles, Towns, and the New World.
Oct. 5 Discussion of Readings:
"The Trapped Maiden"
"The Examination of Mrs. Ann Hutchinson"
"The Church Trial of Mistress Ann Hibbens"
"Ordinary Deals at Suffolk County Court"
(Xerox copies on reserve)
Oct. 10 THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: Changing Ideologies and Environments.
Oct. 12 Readings: Charles Brockden Brown, ALCUIN
Abigail Adams' LETTERS (Xerox copy on reserve)
David Musto, "The Childhood of John Quincy Adams"
(Xerox on reserve)
Oct. 17 THE IDEAL WOMAN: Female Socialization and Woman's Role in 19th Century America.
Oct. 19 Readings: Ann Firor Scott, THE SOUTHERN LADY, Ch. 1 & 2
Eleanor Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE, Ch. 1
"Diary and Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Dison Smith Geer" (Xerox on reserve)
Select one advice book, marriage guide, etc.
Oct. 24 THE REALITY: Women in the Economy, I.
Oct. 31 WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY, II
Nov. 2 WOMEN AND EDUCATION: Other Jobs, Other Strivings, Other Discontents, 1
Nov. 4 Readings: Flexner, Chap. 2
One history of a women's college or a biography or autobiography of an American woman educator.

Nov. 9 WOMEN AND EDUCATION, II
Readings: Gerda Lerner, GRIMKE SISTERS

Nov. 14 SAINTED MOTHERS AND NEW BUREAUCRATS: Women .and Religion, Role and Role Change in Jacksonian America.

Nov. 16 Readings: Carol Smith-Rosenberg, "Beauty, the Beast and the Militant Woman." (Xerox copies on reserve)
Lerner, GRIMKE SISTERS (con't)

Nov. 21 SEX AND SEX ROLES—A SEAMLESS CONTINUUM: Sex Mores, Birth Control and Abortion in Nineteenth-Century America.

Nov. 23 Readings: Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles E. Rosenberg, "The New Woman and the Troubled Man."
Charles E. Rosenberg, "Sex Role and Class in Nineteenth Century America." (Xerox on reserve)
John Humphrey Noyes, MALE CONTINENCE
AN ESSAY DEVOTED TO THE WELFARE OF MARRIED WOMEN AND THE MARRIAGE STATE BY ONE OF THE NUMBER
ANTI-NATAL INFANTICIDE (Xerox on reserve)

Nov. 28 THE BLACK WOMAN IN AMERICA
Readings: begin Elizabeth Cady Stanton, EIGHTY YEARS AND MORE
Emma Goldman, LIVING MY LIFE

Dec. 5 THE NATURAL STEPS: The Woman's Rights Movement, Seneca Falls to 1870.
Readings: finish Stanton and Goldman.

The course will include a final exam and a term paper—to be discussed.

CHAPTER NINE

WOMEN IN AMERICAN CULTURE

American Studies 376B
Spring, 1973
MARY LYNN
Skidmore College

REQUIRED BOOKS
- Nancy Cott, ROOT OF BITTERNESS
- Eleanor Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE
- Aileen Karditor, UP FROM THE PEDESTAL
- Christopher Lasch, THE NEW RADICALISM IN AMERICA
- Marion Starkey, THE DEVIL IN MASSACHUSETTS

RESERVE BOOKS
- Philippe Aries, CENTURIES OF CHILDHOOD
- David Hunt, PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN HISTORY
- Peter Laslett, THE WORLD WE HAVE LOST
- John Demos, A LITTLE COMMONWEALTH
- Kenneth A. Lockridge, A NEW ENGLAND TOWN
- Edmund Sears Morgan, PURITAN FAMILY
- John Winthrop, SOME OLD PURITAN LOVE-LETTERS
- Chadwick Hansen, WITCHCRAFT AT SALEM
- Richard Brandon Morris, STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN LAW
- Lydia Maria Child, THE AMERICAN FRUGAL HOUSEWIFE
- Mary Boykin Chesnut, DIARY FROM DIXIE
- William Byrd, SECRET DIARY
- Gerda Lerner, THE GRIMKE SISTERS
- Michael Guillaume St. John de Crevecoeur, LETTERS FROM AN AMERICAN FARMER
- Abigail Duniway, PATH BREAKING
- Jane Addams, TWENTY YEARS AT HULL HOUSE
- William O'Neill, EVERYONE WAS BRAVE
- M.F. Farnham and Ferdinand Lundberg, MODERN WOMAN: THE LOST SEX
- Lynn Townsend White, EDUCATING OUR DAUGHTERS

REFERENCE BOOKS
- DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (DAB)
- NOTABLE AMERICAN WOMEN

ARTICLES ON RESERVE
- John Demos, "Underlying Themes in the Witchcraft of Seventeenth Century New England, "AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, June, 1970.
- JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY HISTORY, vol. II, no. 2, Autumn, 1971 (special issue on history of the family)
- Gerda Lerner, "The Lady and the Mill-Girl"
- Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood"
- Linda Gordon, "Women in History"

February 6. Introduction

February 8. Women's History

Read: Gordon, "Women in History" and Kraditor, "Introduction."

Report: Prepare a brief report on your own life as if you were a 21st century historian, using non-traditional sources, e.g. music, art, photographs, architecture, artifacts, etc. What are the important questions which this type of investigation should include?

February 13. European Background

Read: Aries, pp. 339-407; Laslett; Hunt, JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY HISTORY (groups of five will read each source)

February 15: Women in New England

Read: Kraditor, pp. 29-44; Winthrop

Report: Write a Puritan sermon on marriage

February 20. The Puritan Family

Read: Morgan, PURITAN FAMILY or Demos, A LITTLE COMMONWEALTH

Report: Read either Samuel Sewall's DIARY or Michael Wigglesworth's DIARY and report on Puritan family life as portrayed in these works.

February 22. Unusual Women

Read: Cott, pp. 34-46

Report: Mary Dyer, Anne Bradstreet, Eliza Pinckney, Margaret Brent. Using the DAB and NOTABLE AMERICAN WOMEN, give a brief report on one of these exceptional women. What happened to non-conforming women and why?

February 27. Witchcraft

Read: Starkey (entire);Demos, "Some Underlying Themes"; Cott, pp. 47-73

Report: Read Chadwick Hansen's analysis of the Salem witch trails and compare it to the approaches in Starkey and Demos. Include a summary of Hansen's argument.

March 1. Eighteenth Century Development

**Editor's Note:* In the case of this syllabus sent to us, I would call particular attention to the *reports* Ms. Lynn assigns, which strike me as varied and imaginative—BC.

Read: Cott, pp. 77-110.

Report: Read the SECRET DIARY of William Byrd. Write *Mrs.* Byrd's secret diary for any one week.

March 6. The Legal Position of Women

Read: Morris; xeroxed wills and diaries

Report: Write a series of letters to a friend ~~or~~ relative describing your family's activities during your first year on the frontier in Western New York, c. 1800.

March 13. The Cult of True Womanhood

Read: Welter, "Cult of True Womanhood"; Cott, pp. 113-26, 157-77; Lerner, "Lady and the Mill-Girl."

Report: Write an editorial for GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK defining the nature of true womanhood. Then compose letters to the editor from: a frontier wife, a factory operative, an abolitionist, and a middle-class urban woman.

March 15. Women on Farms and in Factories

Read: Child; Cott, pp. 126-57, 311-47.

Report: Write a column of advice to farm women; include suggestions as to their appropriate tasks and responsibilities, both moral and economic, household hints, training, etc.

You are a farmer's daughter who has been working in the mills at

Lowell for one year. Write an autobiographical essay for the LOWELL OFFERING. Be sure to compare factory life with farm life.

March 29. Early Feminism

Read: Flexner, pp. 23-40; Kraditor, pp. 53-87.

Report: Report, using the DAB and NOTABLE AMERICAN WOMEN, on one of these early feminists: Judith Sargent Stevens Murray, Catherine Beecher, Emma Willard, Frances Wright.

March 22. Organized Feminism

Read: Flexner, pp. 41-101; Kraditor, pp. 183-88, 220-52.

Report: Read Kraditor, pp. 45-52, 189-203. Prepare a debate on the position of women in America (c. 1850). Present feminist, antifeminist and moderate positions.

Report to a women's rights convention in 1860 on the gains made since 1830. Be very specific as you explain reforms in the legal and social status of women. (Read Flexner, pp. 105-79).

March 24-April 4. Spring Vacation.

April 5. Southern Women

Read: Cott, pp. 181-218; and Chesnut, A DIARY FROM DIXIE

Report: Using THE AMERICAN SLAVE, A COMPOSITE AUTOBIOGRAPHY, G. Radwick, ed., as your major source, report on the role and status of women under slavery. Your report should describe labor, marriage and the family, living conditions, etc. of female slaves.

April 10. Victorian Sexuality

Read: Cott, pp. 263-309; Lasch, pp. 3-68.

Report: Why have some authorities argued that prostitution was a necessary adjunct to the patriarchal Victorian family system?. Were American feminists conscious of and resistant to prostitution? The double standard?

Feminists have recently argued that control over the reproductive process is a precondition of emancipation. Did Americans limit the size of their families? What means of contraception were available? To whom?

April 12. Temperance and Labor

Read: Flexner, pp. 179-262.

Report: Report on women and temperance. Why were so many feminists involved in the crusade against liquor? Concentrate on Frances Willard and the W.C.T.U.

Why did some feminists become involved in trying to improve the lot of working women? What ways did they choose? Write a dialogue between Emma Goldman and Florence Kelley, debating the relationship between feminism and working women.

April 17. Leisured Women

Read: Veblen; Cott, pp. 351-70.

Report: Read Charlotte Perkins Gilman, AUTOBIOGRAPHY or Jane Addams, TWENTY YEARS AT HULL HOUSE, and report on their solutions to the dilemma of uselessness.

April 19. The Suffragist Victory

Read: Flexner, pp. 306-31; Kraditor, p. 287.

Report: Debate: was suffrage worth the struggle?

April 24. Flappers and Feminism

Read: Kraditor, pp. 293-301, 331-46; Lasch, pp. 104-40.

Report: Using film, or books on film, as your basic source, write an analysis of Hollywood's portrayal of women during the twenties.

April 26. Feminine Mystique

Read: Betty Freidan, FEMININE MYSTIQUE and Farnham and Lundberg, MODERN WOMAN: THE LOST SEX.

Report: Using material from the following specified areas, analyze what Freidan calls the feminine mystique during the period 1945-63; women's magazines, popular fiction, advertising, television or radio, college sociology texts.

May 1. New Feminism

Read: Xeroxed material

Report: Compile and present a five-year plan for the moderate wing of the women's liberation movement. Outline the areas where work needs to be done, and suggest appropriate means to achieve your ends. Present your program to the national convention of NOW.

May 3. Radical Feminism

Read: Xeroxed material—Dixon, Decter.

Report: Pro- and anti-women's liberation debate.

Report: Abortion.

May 8. Women and the Future

Report: Write your autobiography, c. 1992.

CHAPTER TEN

WOMEN IN AMERICA

English 332*
Winter, 1972
BARBARA MACEACHERN
University of Southern California

English 332, "Woman in America," studies the American woman's search for self-actualization. Primary readings are drawn from fiction of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by authors critical of stereotyped feminine roles: Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry James, Stephen Crane, Sinclair Lewis, Kate Chopin, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Mary McCarthy and Paule Marshall. Each novel focuses on a heroine who may be a peasant or an artistocrat, a country girl or a factory worker, an Easterner or a Westerner; but whatever her background, she typically fails to achieve her goals or even a satisfactory existence. Supplementary readings in history, sociology and economics are designed to help explore why a society based on democratic principles has retarded the social development of women.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Nathaniel Hawthorne	"The Birthmark," "Rappaccini's Daughter"	Sept. 21
	BLITHEDALE ROMANCE (1851)	Sept. 26
Herman Melville	"The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids" (1855)	Sept. 28
William Dean Howells	A MODERN INSTANCE (1882)	Oct. 3
Henry James	DAISY MILLER (1878)	Oct. 10
Stephen Crane	MAGGIE: A GIRL OF THE STREETS (1893)	Oct. 17
Kate Chopin	THE AWAKENING (1899)	Oct. 24
Edith Wharton	THE HOUSE OF MIRTH (1905)	Oct. 31
	Hour Examination	Nov. 9
Willa Cather	MY ANTONIA (1918)	Nov. 14
F. Scott Fitzgerald	THE STORIES OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD	Nov. 21
Sinclair Lewis	MAIN STREET (1920)	Nov. 28
William Faulkner	AS I LAY DYING (1930)	Dec. 5
Mary McCarthy	THE GROUP (1963)	Dec. 12
Paule Marshall	BROWN GIRL, BROWNSTONES (1959)	Jan. 4
Sylvia Plath	THE BELL JAR (1970)	Jan 9
	Final Examination	Jan. 18

**Editor's Note:* Readers will be interested not only in the "essay assignments" Ms. MacEachern uses for her courses, but in particular her creative ideas for examination questions. This is thes only case, in fact, in which sample exams are included in these volumes—BC.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS

Due December7—800-1000 words, 4-5 pages. Choose one of the following:

1. Miles Coverdale and Ralph Touchett as Voyeurs
2. The Dark Lady's Assets and Liabilities: Zenobia and Marcia
3. Henrietta Stackpole and Gertie Farish as Inglorious Foils: Why Are They Not Heroines?
4. Fantasy as Motive for Maggie and Lily Bart
5. Failure as Success in the HOUSE OF MIRTH
6. Poverty in Howells and Crane
7. Techniques of Social Protest in Melville and Crane
8. Ocean as Symbol in THE AWAKENING
9. Suicide: A Structural Device in THE AWAKENING and MY ANTONIA
10. A Conversation Between Marcia Hubbard and Antonia Shimerda
11. The Rake's Progress: Osmund, Pete, Alcée Arobin, Gus Trenor
12. From Lily to Fitzgerald's Josephine: Progress in Liberation?
13. The Power of the "Other Woman": Mme. Merle and Bertha Dorset
14. Flappers and Hired Girls: Drudgery as Freedom?

Due January 9—800-1000 words, 4-5 pages. Choose one of the following:
Number 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12 or 14 above

15. The Dark Lady's Assets and Liabilities
16. Contrasting Views of Poverty in Crane and Cather
17. A Conversation Between Marcia Hubbard and Antonia Cuzak
18. Silver Threads Among the Gold: The Declining Years of...
19. The Last of the Knights: Halleck, Lebrun, Selden
20. The Meaning of Marriage in THE AWAKENING and MAIN STREET
21. The Importance of Scene in...
22. Daughters of Myrrha: Father-Daughter Bonds in...
23. Motherhood and Fulfillment in...
24. The Sacred Journey in AS I LAY DYING

ORAL REPORTS

(Samples of research topics which have been prepared by students and presented as oral reports)

The History of the Welfare System in America as It Affects the Welfare Mother
Roles of Aged Women in American Society
Sylvia Plath: Martyr to Society?
Woman as Artist? Mary Cassatt and Georgia O'Keefe (slide show)
Emphases in Nineteenth Century Women's Magazines
Frances Wright and the Nashoba Community
The Southern Lady, 1830-1930
Frances Willard and the Women's Christian Temperance Union
Emma Goldman: A Study in Rebellion
The Jewish Woman in America
Margaret Mead's Work in Anthropology
Women in Business
Karen Horney's Career in Psychological Research
Blues Singers: Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, Roberta Flack
Attitudes Towards Women in the Theories of Marx and Lenin
Isadora

Florence Kelley and the National Consumers' League
Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Women and Economics
Margaret Sanger's Flight for Birth Control
Martha Graham, Pioneer in Dance (with film presentation)

EXAMINATIONS

Hour Examination

Discuss *five* of the following quotations, (a) identifying the character or characters involved, (b) locating the passage as precisely as you can within the appropriate text and (c) showing how it related to a major theme or issue in the work. (20 points each)

1. "I was sure it would be awfully poky. I was sure we should be going round all the time with one of those dreadful old men that explain about the pictures and things. But we only had about a week of that, and now I'm enjoying myself. I know ever so many people, and they are all so charming. The society's very select. There are all kinds—English, and Germans and Italians. I think I like the English best. I like their style of conversation. But there are some lovely Americans. I never saw anything so hospitable."
2. Grasping at the veil, he flung it upward, and caught a glimpse of a pale, lovely face beneath; just one momentary glimpse, and then the apparition vanished, and the silvery veil fluttered slowly down and lay upon the floor. Theodore was alone. Our legend leaves him there. His retribution was, to pine for ever and ever for another sight of that dim, mournful face,—which might have been his life-long household fireside joy,—to desire, and waste life in a feverish quest, and never meet it more.
3. When I closed my eyes I could hear them all laughing...It came over me, as it had never done before, the relation between girls like those and the poetry of Virgil. If there were no girls like them in the world, there would be no poetry. This revelation seemed to me inestimably precious. I clung to it as if it might suddenly vanish.
4. In the evenings of the week days he often took her to see plays in which the dazzling heroine was rescued from the palatial home of her treacherous guardian by the hero with the beautiful sentiments....The last act was a triumph for the hero, poor and of the masses, the representative of the audience, over the villain and the rich man, his pockets stuffed with bonds, his heart packed with tyrannical purposes, imperturbable amid suffering.
5. It at once assumed the character of a home, while she herself invested it with a charm which it reflected like a warm glow. There was with her a feeling of having descended in the social scale, with a corresponding sense of having risen in spiritual. Every step which she took toward relieving herself from obligations added to her strength and expansion as an individual. She began to look with her own eyes; to see and to apprehend the deeper undercurrents of life.
6. The afternoon was warm, and proprinquity made her more than usually aware that he was red and massive, and that beads of moisture had caused the dust of the train to adhere unpleasantly to the broad expanse of cheek and neck which he turned to her; but she was aware also, from the look in his small dull eyes, that the contact with her freshness was as agreeable to him as the sight of a cooling beverage.

   The perception of this fact helped her to answer gaily: "It's not often I have the chance. There are too many ladies to dispute the privilege with me."

"The privilege of driving me home? Well, I'm glad you won the race anyhow. But I know what really happened—my wife sent you. Now didn't she?"

7. He went out of the room in angry impatience, which he could hardly hide, when one of his sisters tried to make him take the baby. Little by little his compassion adjusted itself to the new conditions; it accepted the child as an element of her misery in the future, when she must realize the hideous deformity of her marriage. His prophetic feeling of this, and of her inaccessibility to human help here and hereafter, made him sometimes afraid of her; but all the more severely he exacted of his ideal of her that she should not fall beneath the tragic dignity of her fate through any levity of her own.

Final Examination

Part I. Match *12* of the following emblems with the woman whose role is most closely associated with it. (25 points)

baby carriage
birthmark
coffin
deserted library
violin
bird with broken wing
plow
veil
airplane
scythe and rags
bobbed hair
exotic flower
"modern" furniture
Bowery

Part II. Write coherent, thoughtfully illustrated essay on *3* topics. For maximum credit, use different works for each essay. (25 points each)

A. Compare the contrast Marcia Hubbard, Addie Bundren and/or Hawthorne's Priscilla as exemplars of the feminine mystique.

B. "The American novel has yet to produce a heroine who is not morally or psychologically stunted." Comment with specific reference to at **least 3** novels.

C. Traditionally the rake is a character of great virility and personal appeal who is sexually irresponsible. Westervelt, Gilbert Osmund, Pete, Alcée Arobin, Gus Trenor and Harald Petersen all seem related to this species of chauvinist. In the novels we have read, are they oppressors of helpless victims? Discuss *2 or 3*.

D. Stories we have read by Melville, Howells, Crane, Cather, Lewis and McCarthy function as vehicles of social protest. What specifically are their targets? How successfully is their criticism integrated into the work as a whole? Write on *2*.

E. More than seventy years ago, Charlotte Perkins Gilman suggested that women will never be fulfilled as individuals until they are able to pursue work which frees them of economic dependence on male relatives. Does the way in which working women are treated in the novel support her view? *Consider 2 or 3* choosing among Henrietta Stackpole, Gertie Farish, Antonia/Lena/Tiny, Bea Sorenson, Cousin Eva Parrington, Libby MacAusland. It may help to refer also to historical figures such as Margaret Fuller, Margaret Sanger, Gilman herself, etc.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PROGRAMS OF WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSES

From "Courses in Women's History and Related Fields" in Bulletins No. 2 and No. 3 from the Coordinating Committee on Women in the Historical Profession. We have selected a few examples of interdisciplinary approaches (r.e. "General studies" on the West Coast) or approaches that are in some way unique.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
"AMERICAN FEMINISM TO 1900" and "AMERICAN FEMINISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY," Frank Stricker. (Undergraduate; 1970-71)

"Central theme of the courses was feminism as a conscious, explicit ideology; why it emerged when it did, why it waned, nature of suffrage ideology, Social Feminism, etc. As result we spent a great deal of time on the suffrage movement, probably too much according to some people in class. Next time around I would scratch Catt and Schuler, add a few more novels, and perhaps another biography. The stuff by and about Emma Goldman was undoubtedly the most successful." Readings included Catt and Schuler, WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND POLITICS; Drinnon, REBEL IN PARADISE; Woolf, ROOM OF ONE'S OWN; Dreiser, SISTER CARRIE; Gilman, WOMEN AND ECONOMICS.

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

"WOMEN: HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES." Prof. Lois G. Schwoer. (Seminar; Spring 1971)

"The purpose was to examine 'women's lib' within historical context, using not only history but anthropology, psychology, sociology, literature and art. The Executive Secretary of the Citizens Advisory Council on the Status of Women participated in one seminar. Great enthusiasm was generated, and the seminar will be repeated." Readings included Aries, CENTURIES OF CHILDHOOD; Capellanus, ART OF COURTLY LOVE; Friedan, FEMININE MYSTIQUE; Mead, SEX AND TEMPERAMENT; Millett, SEXUAL POLITICS; Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of Women—American Historical Association.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

Action Studies Program: "THE SOCIALIZATION OF AMERICAN WOMEN." Sheryl Malfield and Mimi Frenier. (Undergraduate; Spring 1972)

The course combines readings in American history and sociology; its aim is to study the formation and perpetuation of sex roles in America. Readings include Maccoby, THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEX DIFFERENCES; Mead, SEX AND TEMPERAMENT; Lederer, FEAR OF WOMEN; Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE; Gilman, WOMEN AND ECONOMICS; Moody, GROWING UP IN MISSISSIPPI; Lash, ELEANOR AND FRANKLIN.

History 16:187, "STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF WOMEN—THE UNITED STATES." Prof. Linda Kerber. (Upper division; Fall 1972)

An introduction to Women's Studies followed by a survey of American Social History as it has reflected the changing roles of women and the family

(17th to 20th centuries). Readings include the works of articulate women, the analyses of historians, and extensive samplings of American literature and films.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Women's Continuing Education, General Extension Division
Westbrook Hall
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

"WOMAN IN AMERICA." Prof. Clarke A. Chambers, Coordinator. (Upper division; 1971-72)
Lectures in the series include:
"Colonial Women," Lonna Malmsheimer, American Studies; "Black Women," Josie Johnson, University Regent; "Abolitionism and Social Justice," Winifred Bolin, Dept. of History; "Legal and Civil Status," Joyce A. Hughes, Law School; "Margaret Fuller," Mary Turpie, English & American Studies; "The Woman as Radical—Emma Goldman," Mulford Q. Sibley, Dept. of Political Science; "Roles, and Cultures," Cynthia Cone, Dept. of Anthropology; "Immigrant Woman," Rudolph J. Vecoli, Dept. of History; "The American Woman at Play," Andrea Hinding, Social Welfare Archives; "Nature/Nurture," Richard Hey, Family Social Science; "Women in Shakespeare," Toni McNaron, Dept. of English; "Women in Literature," Susan Toth; "Images of Women," Clarke Chambers and Mary Turpie.

MUNDELEIN COLLEGE, Chicago

"THROUGH THE EYES OF WOMEN: PERSPECTIVES ON BRITISH AND AMERICAN SOCIETY, 1790— Jenny Knause.

Seminar based on writings of British and American Feminists. Reading and discussion of works by Mary Wollenstonecraft, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Taylor, Charlotte Gilman, Emma Goldman, in an attempt to establish together a sense of attitudes towards society at large, as well as information on the women's movement. Members of the class will then work on individual projects for class presentation using primary material by other woman writers. This will include investigation of the Chicago Historical Society.
"INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT." Jenny Knauss, History Department, primarily for freshmen.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO (CSUS)[1]
6000 J Street; Sacramento, California 95819

"The Women's Studies Program is under the aegis of the Women's Caucus, with the support and endorsement of the Faculty Women's Association. Women's Studies is stronger here than American Studies, or, as of now, the Department of Humanities. A Women's Studies Board administers the program, and students—graduate and undergraduate—are involved in all phases of it, administration as well as teaching, as full partners with faculty (outnumbering us, in fact). With Kate Millett and Betty Chmaj sharing the post for Distinguished Visiting Professor of General Studies for the year 1972-73, the importance of Women's studies here will further be dramatized."—Ellen Smith.

[1] Formerly Sacramento State College. This is my new home, of course, and I have learned since arriving that Ellen Smith was modest in her description (above) of the strength of the Women's Studies program here—it is easily one

of the largest and best in the nation among programs I have surveyed. Since I have access to the information, I am including a full description of courses scheduled for spring of 1973. Especially important is the Women's Studies Minor, which has been approved by the Chancellor's office (where proposals from other colleges have been vetoed) and which sets a precedent not only for the state college system of which Cal State, Sacramento is a part but also for similar systems across the country. Among the noteworthy aspects of the program are some *unique* courses (for instance, Ruth Sime's "Women in Science"), the *cooperation* between the university and the community and the interaction between the academic and non-academic (see Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen on Continuing Education Programs, and the *range* of courses and instructors—from formal to experimental, from strictly disciplinary courses (in a wide range of disciplines!) to courses under "Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences" or "Experimental and Honors" or "Humanities," and from courses prepared by faculty with PhDs of many years to courses taught by women now finishing up MAs. Of the instructors listed on the pages that follow, 17 have PhDs, 2 are now completing PhDs, 3 have MFA or MA degrees, 3 have BAs. Two instructors are men, both with PhDs—BC.

Women's Studies Minor

The Minor in Women's Studies consists of 18 units, 9 of which must be in upper division courses. Three courses (see below) are required; the other nine units will be selected in consultation with a Women's Studies advisor.

Required courses (6 units):
  Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences (IAS) 122: Sociological Perspectives on the American Woman
  History 167: History of Women in the U.S.
Also required: 3 units from *one* of the following categories:

Women in the Humanities

Eng. 180: Major Women Poets
Eng. 180: Contemporary Women Writers
Eng. 196: Virginia Woolf
Eng. 196: The Art of Courtly Love
Hum. 196: Women in Film & American Culture
Jour. 196: Women in Mass Media
IAS. 124: Performance: Woman's Art Form
IAS. 126: Politics of Women in Art
IAS. 128: Image of Women in Music

The Ethnic Woman

IAS. 96/196: The Asian Woman in America
IAS. 196: La Mujer Chicana

Women in the Sciences

IAS. 96/196: Women in Science
HSS. X196: Health & the Female Sex

Women in the Social Sciences

Soc. 196: Women & Social Stratification
Anth. 183: Women Cross-Culturally
Govt. 196: The Woman Question in a Political Perspective
Govt. 196: Women in Politics in Contemporary America

Hist. 101: Research Seminar in the Historiography of Women
Hist. 96/196: The New Woman
Psych. 96/196: Rewriting the Psychology of Women and Marriage
Ed. A & CE. 278: Counseling Seminar: Women
Hist. 196: Women in 20th Cent. Europe
ID. X196: Women and the Law

Present Courses in Women's Studies

ANTHRO. 183: WOMEN CROSS-CULTURALLY— The position of women in various societies, preliterate through contemporary industrial; the evolution of women's roles and rights cross-culturally. Curly, Jacbos.

EDUC. A & CE. 278: COUNSELING SEMINAR: WOMEN—Intensive examination of techniques of counseling women. Haun.

ENG 180: MAJOR WOMEN POETS—A study of major women poets around the world with emphasis on the cultural, generally patriarchal, conditions under which they wrote. Readings in Sappho, Louise Labe, Nelly Sachs, Anna Ahkmatova, Gabriela Mistral, Emily Dickinson, Sylvia Plath, etc. Smith.

ENG. 180: CONTEMPORARY WOMEN WRITERS—A study of contemporary British and American novelists and poets. Readings in Doris Lessing, Anais Nin, Sylvia Plath, Lenore Kandel, etc. Smith.

ENG. 196: THE ART OF COURTLY LOVE—An examination of the cultural phenomenon known as courtly love, as expressed in the literature of the High Middle Ages, and of its implications for human behavior today. Special emphasis on the role of women. Hanson-Smith.

ENG. 196: VIRGINIA WOOLF—A study of the major works and the critical approaches to those works. Special emphasis on the feminist themes in Woolf's work. Keltner.

GOVT. 196: THE WOMAN QUESTION IN A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE—A study, from the comparative point of view, of the cultural, social and political factors which tend to exclude women from exercising effective political power. Amundsen.

GOVT. 196: WOMEN IN POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA—An examination and evaluation of several political approaches to women's equality in America today. Moulds.

HIST. 196: WOMEN IN 20TH CENTURY EUROPE—An analysis c [illegible] cal role of women of the Left and the Right in Europe fron [illegible] the present. The course will concentrate on individual wome [illegible] en's political movements, and legislation reflecting attitudes towards women. Sexter, Moon.

HIST. 167: HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE U.S.—An examination of the roll of women throughout American history with special attention to the suffrage movement, abolitionism, trade unions, divorce reform and birth control. Consideration of the failure of past attempts to emancipate women and the idea of current attempts. Goodart.

HIST. 101: RESEARCH SEMINAR IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF WOMEN—A research seminar in historical writing on women and related topics. Submission of a paper based on historical research is required of each student. Wilson.

HIST. X96/196: THE NEW WOMAN—An investigation of the past and present conditions of women from an historical and sociological point of view in order to determine their current status and problems. Wilson, Amundsen, del Drago.

HUM. 182: WOMEN IN FILM AND AMERICAN CULTURE—An examination of ideas about women in American culture as revealed in images and plots in selected films. Chmaj.

IT. 196: THE WOMAN IN ITALIAN LITERATURE—A study of the image of women from the sublimation of Dante and Petrarch, through the humourous sporadic emancipation of women in the Renaissance, to Pavese's "misunderstood misogyny" and "suicidal lesbian" counterpointed by Moravia's "phallic novel." Lee.

JOUR. 196: WOMEN IN THE MASS MEDIA—An exploration of the role of women as presented in mass media with particular emphasis on advertising and news reporting. Students will be responsible for a media project.

PSYCH. 96/196: REWRITING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN AND MARRIAGE—A seminar studying the traditional and new theories on the nature of women and the nature of marriage. Dempsey.

PSYCH. 196: WOMEN AND PSYCHOLOGY—A detailed examination of various psychological theories exploring the psychology of women. Shaban.

SOC. 196: WOMEN AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION—An examination of the role of women, particularly in capitalist societies, and an analysis of the ways in which this role helps maintain the status quo. Kanter.

IAS. 196: LA MUJER CHAICANA—A critical analysis of the cultural influences that the family, community, religion, economic status, and peers play upon the decisions, values and roles held by Chicanas. An examination of the processes which have resulted in changes in attitudes, values, and roles of the contemporary Chicana. de los Rez.

IAS. 96/196: THE ASIAN WOMAN IN AMERICA —An examination of the Asian woman's role in America through an historical, social, and economic perspective. Hamada.

IAS. 96/196: WOMEN IN SCIENCE —(1) History of Women in Science—A detailed study of women scientists and mathematicians from Ancient Greece and Egypt to the present, with emphasis on 20th century. (2) Biographies of Contemporary Women Scientists: individual projects by students involve obtaining biographical data from living women scientists. (3) Socio-cultural Studies of Women in the Sciences—psychological studies of sex-role differentiation, influence of educational system on male and female children, sex-typing of scientific occupations, comparison of U.S. with other countries with respect to women in sciences, etc. Sime.

IAS. 96/196: INTRODUCTION TO THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT—An introductory course surveying the main socio-economic problems of contemporary American women, including various aspects of sex-role stereotyping. Emphasis on current issues. Warden.

IAS. 121: WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: ADVANCED THEORY AND PRACTICE—A specialized course developing feminist theory as well as permitting research and projects related to the economic, social or political status of women in contemporary America. Wagner.

IAS. 122: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE AMERICAN WOMAN—An examination of the position of women in American society. Emphasis on changing roles, values, and status of women with detailed examination of the cultural conditions determing the status. Kennedy, Olson.

IAS. 124: PERFORMANCE: A WOMAN'S ART FORM—An multi-media experimental art form that offers an outlet for many abilities and emotions through bringing into conscious art form the unconcious elements in dreams and bodily movements. Hall.

IAS. 126: POLITICS OF WOMEN IN ART—A general introduction to the work of women artists for non-artists. Emphasis on women's achievements in painting and sculpture. Hall.

IAS. 128: IMAGE OF WOMEN IN MUSIC—A study of the image of women in the various fields of music: classical, jazz, rock, folk, country and western. Kennedy.

HSS. X196: HEALTH AND THE FEMALE SEX—A study of the myths, misconceptions and 'old wives tales' about women's health and an examination of their function in society's view of women as physically passive creatures. Burnell.

Experimental and Honors (EXP H) 50: THE LESBIAN IN AMERICA. Henningan.

EXP H. 50: MEN'S LIBERATION. Michael Cunningham, Steven Weinberg.

EXP H. 50: MOTHER/WOMAN/CHILD. Cindy Weinberg, Judy Fritsche.

EXP H. 50: CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE. Lynn Haun, William Dorman.

SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE
Bronxville, New York

"In the fall of 1972 Sarah Lawrence College is planning to offer an Individualized Masters Program. One of the concentrations available will be in Women's History. The program for a Women's History MA will be suited to individual needs and will consist of three 10 credit courses plus a thesis.

"1/3 of the program will be a conference course and tutorial in Women's History (American or Medieval and Early Modern European); 1/3 in a correlated field of history; 1/3 in another discipline related to student interest in anthropology, economics, literature and art history. The thesis will be in the history of Women, under the guidance of a specialist in the field.

"The student may also participate in an interdisciplinary Women's Studies program for undergraduates offered at the college and may take on some teaching responsibilities in this program.

"Full-time or part-time students will be accepted. The BA degree is a prerequisite. Students may take as long as they need to complete their work. Students interested in this program should apply for further information by writing to Dr. Melissa L. Richter, Dean of Graduate Studies, Center for Continuing Education, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York 10708."

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN FRANCISCO (CSUSF)[2]

Formerly San Francisco State College. I have selected only a few of the courses (including many traditional courses already being taught) listed on an official brochure just out by the college as a "Women's Studies Program"—BC

"Most courses listed prefer a balance of men and women students and do not have previous course requirements. Check with individual instructors for details. Courses with an "e" before the number are extension courses. (Fall, 1972)"

Courses with a special focus on women include;

ENGLISH 301: MYTH AND PSYCHOLOGY OF THE HERO, or STUDIES IN MASCULINE IDENTITY

From the mythic foundations for masculine identity into a study of role-identity in literature, movies, comic books, etc.; psychological and mythic theories and their critical application in interpretation of art and culture in various manifestations of what is called "heroic" or "masculine." —Wetner.

ENGLISH 303: WOMAN AS HERO

Historical study of women writers who were struggling with the creation of heroines and the definition of feminine identity. For most of literary history women have been defined and described by men; this course will trace women's struggle for redefinition. —Jane Gurko.

HEALTH EDUCATION 320: SEX AND FAMILY LIFE

Major problems of sex and the family; misconceptions and fallacies of human reproduction; advances in endocrinology and genetics; birth control, abortion, adverse effects of drugs on embryo; childbirth; prenatal and postnatal growth and development.—Ballor & Gershman.

HISTORY 678, WOMEN IN THREE SOCIETIES

By comparing the position of women in the United States, France and Mexico since the 18th Century, the course will attempt to go beyond myths of inferiority or oppression of women; will explore common essences and differences focusing on changes in family life. —Mary Felstiner.

HOME ECONOMICS, WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Women's roles in contemporary society as they are defined by societal groups and affected be major problems confronting American families. —Maie Nygren.

PSYCHOLOGY 441, THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAMILY LIVING

The family as a psychological group; the husband-wife relationship with special attention to the dynamics of pairs; the impact of the family on personality and mental health. —Naboisek

SPEECH COMMUNICATION 565, RHETORIC OF SEXUAL LIBERATION

Examination of methods and effects of the rhetorical process of various movements, organizations, and spokeswomen and spokesmen for sexual liberation—in the past and in the present. Courses include laboratory experience in speech making on this issue. —Sally Gearhart.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

TOPICS IN THE HISTORY OF WOMEN FROM THE 15th-20th CENTURY—

Professor Jill Conway and Professor Natalie Zemon Davis.

This undergraduate course will examine the following topics in the context of both European and North American society: family structure, sex, demographic patterns, female participation in the labor force and in political and religious movements; changes in sex roles, in attitudes towards women and in female consciousness. At every point, an effort will be made to compare what is said and thought about women in any of these areas with what was the actual case.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
Seattle, Washington 98105

GIS 255, INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S STUDIES—Mary Aickin.

An interdisciplinary course introducing women's studies through lectures, readings, discussions. Readings include Chopin, THE AWAKENING; Epstein,WOMAN'S PLACE; Doris Lessing, A MAN AND TWO WOMEN; Leo Kanowitz, WOMEN AND THE LAW. Lectures from other departments.

GIS 320, HISTORY OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FEMINISM IN AMERICA, 1830-1970—Mary Aickin.

A lecture and discussion course on the forces affecting women and on women themselves. Readings include Flexnor, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE; Kraditor, UP FROM THE PEDESTAL; Scott, THE AMERICAN WOMAN, WHO WAS SHE?

WOMEN AS THEME IN MODERN ART, (Art History 485), Martin Kingsbury; WOMEN AND THE LAW, (GIS 355), Chris Young; THE PSYCHOBIOLOGY OF WOMEN, (GIS 357), Bonnie Alvarx and Yvonne Palka; PATRIARCHAL POLITICS, (Political Science 213), Lynee Iglitzen; WOMEN IN FRENCH LITERATURE, (French 488), Michael Herschenson; LEGAL PROBLEMS RELATING TO WOMEN (Law 510), Majorie Rombauer.

2Formerly San Francisco State College. I have selected only a few of the courses (including many traditional courses already being taught) listed on an official brochure put out by the college as a "Women's Studies Program."—BC.

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONTINUING EDUCATION

"Victim of the Second American Revolution?"
or "New Challenge to American Studies?"

THE CASE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN

MARIA DEL DRAGO
University of California at Berkeley

In the current "Second American Revolution," as the Women's Liberation Movement has been called, the mature woman could well become the victim—the neglected victim of a bloodless insurrection. For it is her role in American life that is being challenged, her values that have suddenly been declared obsolete, her *raison d'etre* that is now being questioned by many men and women—including herself. How can she cope with this sudden shifting of life styles? One answer, I would like to suggest in this article, is through Continuing Education Programs in Women's Studies. But if these programs are to succeed in serving this need in modern American culture, there must be a radical change in the attitude of our universities and professions, including American Studies, toward the mature woman and her right to such education through the "non-credit," "adult education," "urban extension," or "continuing education" divisions where these courses are now being offered.

In the academic arena itself, the case for Women's Studies has largely been won, despite the wide range of definitions of "women's studies" throughout the country at present—a range which serves as an index to the controversy surrounding the function of such programs in the university and in society. It has been determined that women's studies courses fill a definite need at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. There remains a vast audience of women who fit neither category, however, and who cannot be served by the structured methodology of a university, even when it encompasses the broad scope of an interdisciplinary Women's Studies program. These are the women who want to return to school or work after a period devoted to homemaking, and whose needs are different and more pressing than those of younger students. These are the women who can find the answer to their needs through the academic flexibility offered *only* by Continuing Education.

Surveys by the U.S. Department of Labor indicate clearly that there is a growing interest on the part of mature women to return to college, especially when the chances that a woman can obtain a paid job increase with the level of her education.[2] In the greater Sacramento area alone, thirty-four institutions of higher learning indicated the need for special courses geared to the needs of mature women, according to a 1969 survey conducted by the Sacramento Community Commission for Women.[3] And in its 1971 report "California Women," the California Advisory Commission on the Status of Women included among its recommendations "that the local coalitions which have been formed throughout the State work with the Commission and with local offices of the

State Department of Human Resources Development, local adult education programs, community colleges, employers and others to offer special re-entry and mid-career programs and services for adult women."[4]

Studies by Commissions on the Status of Women in fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and ten municipalities also point to the gaps in educational opportunities for adult women. Their recommendations generally focus on ways of increasing the availability, suitability, and visibility of higher education programs to meet the special needs of mature women—ways calling for the flexibility available only through Continuing Education. The President's Commission on the Status of Women also highlighted the value of Continuing Education for mature women in its report, "American Women" (1963). As one of its *major* recommendations, the Commisssion urged a comprehensive program of Continuing Education geared to the individual woman's needs.[5]

Definite progress toward establishing and expanding such programs has been made. Less than 250 Continuing Education courses for women were being offered in 1968. By 1971, however, they totalled almost 450, and they were the subject of a lengthy special pamphlet entirely devoted to this subject.[6] Today, the newly emerging Continuing Education for Women section of the prestigious (and previously totally male-oriented) National University Extension Association estimates that over 650 such programs are currently being offered throughout the country. Continuing Education for Women, therefore, is obviously a field with unquestionable potential for growth on all campuses, in addition to being *the* fastest growing field within Women's Studies.

One factor accounting for this growth is that standard college courses do not satisfy women who have had considerable experience in life. Mature women with recent experiences in colleges and universities were surveyed by the U.S. Department of Labor (Women's Bureau) and significant numbers were critical of the methodology and content directed toward teen-agers.[7] Other women surveyed had difficulty finding classes that reviewed and updated basic information in their fields of interest. Overall, daytime classes were not nearly as popular as night-classes, and of the women surveyed, most favored flexible schedules offering week-end workshops. Academic credit is often of minor importance to these women, their emphasis being on self-fullfillment, development of a better self-image, and a re-evaluation of the roles of women in our society.

Acknowledging these different needs, programs of Continuing Education for women feature courses that allow mature women to achieve these goals through counseling, small group consciousness-raising sessions and week-end workshops and seminars focusing on the changing roles of women. In the nonthreatening atmosphere of the classroom, mature women feel free to explore the issues raised by the Women's Liberation Movement, and to voice their own feelings about the "problem that has no name," as described by Betty Friedan.[8]

The need for this approach is amply testified to by the two thousand women who completed "Developing New Horizons for Women," the course that is the cornerstone of the Continuing Education program for women at George Washington University (Washington, D.C.); the majority felt most the need to gain self-confidence and a sense of direction.[9] The course is billed as "a course to assist you with *your* personal education and vocational goals," and is filled by the hundreds every semester.

Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, in its Continuum Center features a program offering an "Investigation into Identity."[10] In addition, women can enroll in two courses offered each year for widows and divorcees in crisis. These courses are also held through extension in the various surrounding communities. The Center also offers joint courses for women and men, in the recognition that "the problem is not just one of 'middle-aged women' or 'men in career crisis' but a HUMAN problem of adjusting to constantly changing times....."

The Division of Continuing Education at Indiana University includes courses that encourage women to "investigate their cultural heritage," in addition to general enrichment courses. The three other main goals in this program are the pursuit of intellectual interests, identification of satisfying life styles, and an integration of women's potential for achievement. "To meet these academic goals, experts for all divisions of Indiana University will work together with the Coordinator of Continuing Education Programs for Women in designing non-credit courses; specialized conferences and seminars; counseling opportunities and collections of information about women," according to the program's brochure.[11]

The University of Delaware's rationale for its Continuing Education courses for women simply states: "BECAUSE: women previously have seen themselves through the eyes of men as a result of our culture, there is a need to present a woman's point of view and an intellectual examination of the roles of women. BECAUSE: women often experience discontinuity in their educational experience, the University of Delaware is offering courses which reflect this increasing awareness." Courses here, too, are interdisciplinary, and credits are optional. The curriculum makes maximum use of flexibility in scheduling as well as topics selected.[12] Again, the emphasis is on self-fulfillment and not on academic credit.

Our own experience here at California State University, Sacramento, confirms this need. During the month of August, 1972, a total of 206 inquiries were received by the Coordinator of Continuing Education Programs for Women. Of those replying to an interest-finder stub on the program's brochure, 98% noted "self-fulfillment" to be their primary goal. While Women's Studies courses were offered on this campus through the Continuing Education Division as early as 1971, they were not part of a coordinated program. This is the first year that an attempt has been made to present a comprehensive program in various disciplines. The initial core of eight courses to be offered in the Fall of 1972 will be complemented by additional special events, such as workshops, seminars and conferences to be held on-campus as well as in the community. Courses offer a choice of Women's Studies or interdisciplinary credits, and in some instances, credits in certain schools or departments.

One of the main reasons why academic credits currently are irrelevant to mature women is that up to now the courses that focus on their own practical experience have not been offered for credit toward an academic degree. Dr. Katherine Clarenbach, a specialist in Continuing Education for Women at the University of Wisconsin, suggests that, "relevant life experience" should be an accepted substitute for course work for women who want to return to school in their mature years.[13]

If and when such criteria become acceptable to academicians as well as to administrators in decision-making posts, the emphasis in Continuing Education programs for women will probably shift towards more structured course offerings, featuring academic credits applicable toward a degree program.

These credits will be a combination of academic credits and those based on each woman's "relevant life experience."

Whether such degree programs will become possible for mature women in the future, the programs of the present that can best meet their needs and help them find the answers to some of their pressing, highly introspective questions are to be found in Continuing Education. I attach as Addenda some sample *program and course descriptions of offerings of recent years from various areas* of the country, including the offerings at California State Universities for Fall, 1972, that struck me as being of greatest interest (for various reasons) to scholars in American Studies. Undoubtedly some of these programs are stop-gap efforts that will improve as time goes on; some, I am sure, will seem too "kicky" or "cutsie pie" (terms I have heard) to certain academicians, while others will seem too much like "flyspeck academic concerns" "unrelated to real life" (terms I have also heard) to those with longer experience in the field of adult education as opposed to credit-and-degree oriented education. The primary goal to aim for will be to have programs especially designed to allow latitude and flexibility while addressing social issues, historical justifications, psychological motivations and sociological readjustments. The changing roles of women cross many frontiers and cannot be limited to any one discipline or one field of study. They must be part of a broad interdisciplinary curriculum based on content truly relevant to mature women, regardless of current academic demands.

It is for these reasons—the stress of these programs on interdisciplinary approaches and the need to cross boundaries not only between disciplines dealing with American culture but also between the "real life" and "academic" worlds, between "popular culture" and "high culture," between interests of the home and those of the office—that it seems to me Continuing Education Programs should be of special interest to American Studies.

But there is another reason as well. A central interest of people who deal with American Studies—at least, of those I have found most congenial among the few I have met—has always been the question of the American's quest for self, the search for identity in a new world and a changing culture, the interest in "national character" as it has impinged upon immigrants, foreign travellers, minorities and nationality groups, social and economic classes, and the like. Nowhere can the immediate pertinence of this theme to more than fifty percent of the population be realized more fully than in the cases of mature women taking courses, or planning to take courses, in Continuing Education Programs in Women's Studies. Self-image is the most important thing these women can develop, and more and more, Continuing Education programs are being designed to help them to find out "where they are, what is bothering them. The feeling may be rather vague, but there will be a focus point. Something is causing them distress. When they find it, they'll learn to remedy it and will know what they want to do about it," to quote myself from a recent newspaper interview about the program.[14]

As I stated in that article, the need of these women to search for self-understanding in modern American culture, in fact, is something my own office confronts almost daily. Women will call us for more than course information—they are usually asking for advice. They want to be convinced they need a course, that it will help them. And we, in turn, advise them, assist, inspire, browbeat, bully, shame, whatever is necessary to bring them to realize what they need. Many are frightened. This may be for them the first step back to the professional realm or to the mainstream of society, and many are in for a shock when they come face-to-face with the fact that the values they have lived by may no longer be right for them. But we do try to stress that we are not out to radicalize such women or change their lives against their will. A woman must make that decision for herself. Like everyone else, she is aware, whether she approves or not, that major changes are taking place in men's and women's roles in American culture. We emphasize that she can come to class, sit and listen and evaluate for herself the reasons for these changes and come to her own conclusions on how they will affect her life. Men come as well to some classes. Some women (and men) want no more than to be better conversationalists and broaden their knowledge of things to talk about, but it is the courses that aim for defining self-image in terms of career orientation that have most impressed me. We have one called "Life Planning" that was oversubscribed the first week, a course we hope to have offered by local industries next year, which has as its goal "improving the self-image of women so they are motivated to progress up the career ladder." In the past, urban extension and adult education programs have often taught courses in skills, including managerial skills, but if you teach a woman managerial skills but do not teach her internally to be a manager, you are wasting the skills. There have been those who have argued that they do not see how such approaches will improve occupational efficiency, but if any person is happy with herself or himself, that person will be a better employee.

These lines of argument, which are cast in language readily grasped in the worlds of business and industry, as well as in the suburban worlds from which many of the mature women come, have everything to do with the concern of American Studies with analysis of changing national values, ideas, and institutions as they affect personalities caught in the midst of change. The question may be whether American Studies recognizes and responds to that fact in time to contribute to the "Second American Revolution" now in progress. But in the meantime, Continuing Education programs are not going to wait for an answer; they will continue to add to adult education programs the dimension they have lacked in the past—courses on and for women—and in doing so, they will probably continue to prove what the incredible growth of the past four years has shown: namely, that the movement toward an increase in such courses is not just a "fad" but a revolution in women's education.

Just as HIStory books are now in the process of revision to include in them HERstory as well, so future HERstorians might well come to the conclusion, when looking back upon these crucial years of challenge and response, that Continuing Education for Women served as the catalyst for the liberation of mature women in American culture.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWELVE

[1] Elaine Showalter and Carol Ohmann, eds., "Female Studies IV: Teaching About Women" prepared for the MLA Commission on the Status of Women, KNOW, Inc. December 1971. For a sampling of the range of approaches, the reader need look no further than Part II, Betty E. Chmaj AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES (2 vols.)

[2] U.S. Department of H.E.W., Office of Education, "Opening (Fall) Enrollment in Higher Education, 1965," OE-54003-65. According to a 1969 survey by the Department of Labor, the proportion of women at work outside the home was almost three-fifths (58 percent) among those with four years or more of college. In contrast, it was less than one-half (49 percent) among high school

graduates with no college training and less than one-third (30 percent) among women who had left school after the eighth grade.

[3] Sacramento Community Commission for Women, Proposed Educational and Occupational Counseling Center for Women, 1969.

[4] "California Women," a report of the Advisory Commission on the Status of Women, Ronald Reagan, Governor, 1971.

[5] "American Women," a report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, 1963.

[6] Continuing Education Programs and Services for Women, Women's Bureau, Employment Standards Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Pamphlet 10 (rev.), 1971.

[7] U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, "15 Years After College, A Study of Alumnae of the Class of 1945," Bulletin 283, 1962.

[8] Betty Friedan, THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE, 1964.

[9] The George Washington University, Continuing Education for Women, Dr. Ruth H. Osborn, Director, "Developing New Horizons for Women," Spring Schedule, 1972, The College of General Studies, Washington, D.C.

[10] The Continuum Center, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, "What's going on to Expand YOUR Horizon?" pamphlet, undated.

[11] Continuing Education for Women, Division of Continuing Education, Indiana University, Nancy Closson Seltz, Director; pamphlet, undated.

[12] Educational Services for Women, University of Delaware, "Women's Studies," pamphlet, undated.

[13] Interview with Dr. K. Clarenbach, New Women's Liberation, Honolulu, Hawaii, STAR BULLETIN, Peggy Bondet, Women's Editor, January 13, 1971.

[14] Ann Reed, "Women in Middle Years Are Offered New Vistas," SACRAMENTO BEE, August 26, 1972, p. A14.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR WOMEN COURSES, WORKSHIPS AND PROGRAMS

ALONE IS NOT LONELY

California State University, Sacramento Dr. Lynn E. Haun
Saturdays, 9:00-11:40 a.m. (Sept. 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28, 1972)

Some of the questions to be explored in the course include:

- *Must life be shared to be fulfilling?
- *Can a woman be fulfilled though alone?
- *The 'stigma' of living alone in our society.
- *The backlash of loneliness, and how to prevent it.
- *What are the alternatives?
- *What resources are available?
- *HOW CAN I GROW?

The class will offer exploration of avenues to creative, constructive and fulfilling living for single, divorced and widowed women. Emphasis on new perspectives, different alternatives and discovery of inner creativity and freedom in all areas of existence, leading to more rewarding life styles. This course will be limited to a small enrollment in order to maintain the personal feeling, and to keep it relevant to each participant.

FEMININE/MASCULINE
AN EXPLORATION OF OUR SOCIETY'S "SEXUAL MYSTIQUE"

California State University, Sacramento Karen Kennedy & Carlagaye Olson
Sept. 21, 1972 & for 8 consecutive Thursdays (7:30-9:30 p.m.)

The two instructors will conduct this class as an exploration of the mythology of sexuality in our society, and how this mythology affects our daily lives. The "feminine" and "masculine" roles will be studied and analyzed, and they will be questioned for their validity, and their effects on women, men and even children.

Some of the questions to be explored in the course include:

- *Where did the concepts of "masculine" and "feminine" (as we know them now) originate?
- *Are they "natural" or forced upon us?
- *How valid are they? How do they affect our lives today?
- *Is it true that women are delicate, clinging and dependent?
- *Are men really strong, silent and independent?
- *How do these concepts relate to the need for human liberation?
- *How does the Women's Liberation Movement relate to these?
- *Is there a need for men's liberation?
- *What about children's liberation?

CREATIVE MOVEMENT AND SELF-IMAGE FOR WOMEN

California State University, Sacramento — Patricia One Person
Mondays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. (Sept. 25, Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, & Nov. 6, 13, 1972)

As women in this culture, we are taught to restrict the movements of our bodies in order to live up to a "feminine" ideal. Our clothing: tight girdles, bras, short skirts and high-heeled shoes, reinforce these restrictions. The few areas of life in which we can move our bodies freely, in ballet, gymnastics and dance, insist that our bodies remain sex stereotyped to conform to our cultural ideals.

Haven't you ever wanted to jump up and fling your body into space, leaping and emoting with sound and movement, in a spontaneous burst of feelings?...At one time, you probably did, but now, because of lack of exercise or the proper atmosphere, or the right place to do it, you don't even think about it any more, do you?

This is partly what this course will remedy. It will give you a chance for unself-conscious self-expression through your body, and a time for self-understanding, together with other women who feel equally restricted in their movements.

Through body movements we will discuss and analyze role playing, sexuality, self-defense, fantasy and other topics concerning ourselves as women. We will learn to move our bodies freely, as we learn to free our minds from stereotypes.

THE ROLES OF WOMEN IN FILMS

California State University, Sacramento — Sarah Phelan
Fridays, Nov. 10, 17 (7-10 p.m.); Saturdays, Nov. 11, 18 (10-noon, 1-3 p.m.), 1972

During the 30's, 40's, and 50's, Hollywood's fantasy machines enshrined many actresses. Among these "STARS" shine such glittering tinsel Goddesses as Mae West, Greta Garbo, Barbara Stanwyck, Joan Crawford, Bette Davis, Ingrid Bergman, Katharine Hepburn, Lauren Bacall, Elizabeth Taylor and Marilyn Monroe.

This film seminar will examine the stereotypic roles of women in films, and will attempt to explain the historical reasons and the sociological and cultural attitudes which kept women typecast in such limited roles. By and large, all women have always been cast in two main categories by film-makers: BAD women and GOOD women. Women are either viewed as sex objects or they are sexless.

Through the viewing of films and discussion, the seminar will focus on these stereotypes of women as seen in films. Various filmic devices employed by directors to keep women in their place—such as camera angles and lighting techniques—will also be discussed and analyzed.

The very tentative titles of some of the films that will be viewed include such classics as: ADAM'S RIB, THE BIG SLEEP, BORN YESTERDAY, and MARILYN.

DEVELOPING NEW HORIZONS FOR WOMEN

George Washington University — Ruth H. Osborn, Director
Spring, 1972

This is a group guidance and counseling course designed to help women make the best use of their special abilities and become acquainted with educational, occupational, and community service opportunities. The course is designed to help each woman to:

1. Understand herself as an individual and as a woman;
2. Establish long-range goals based on her interests, abilities, and needs, as well as the needs of her family and of society;
3. Gain confidence in her abilities;
4. Relate information about herself to making choices regarding education, employment, and community service.

An interdisciplinary approach using research from psychology, sociology, history, economics, and education is presented through lectures, group discussions, testing, guest speakers, and individual counseling.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE AMERICAN WOMAN

University of Connecticut — Janice Trecker
Spring, 1972

The course will approach the history of American women by comparing the theories and fantasies about women and their "place" with the experiences of American women on the frontier, in the cities and in the nation's social movements. Particular attention will be paid to the developments of women's education, the women's rights movement, working women, and contemporary problems.

THE UNMARRIED COMMUNITY: AN ALTERNATIVE LIFE STYLE

University of California, Davis — Elizabeth McEvoy & Phyllis Hackett
Fridays, June 4, 11 (7-10 p.m.), Saturdays, June 5, 12 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.), 1972

UNMARRYING: Getting through it may really hurt, but after the trauma, what about getting it back together?

Two recently-divorced women talk about creating new life-styles. They view divorce from the point of view of its advantages with respect to housework, raising children, social life, money, sex, and love. This is a course in interesting possibilities: Experiences will include looking, seeing, listening, hearing, talking, doing. There will be a meta-media presentation.

This course will be of special interest to:

Single women...divorced women with children....divorced women without children....separated women...married women thinking about divorce....married women not thinking about divorce....middle-aged women....young women....elderly women....hip women....straight women....quiet women....outspoken women....All Others....

COOPERATIVE CAREER COUNSELING FOR WOMEN

University of Maryland — A Three-Day Workshop
Program IMPACT (Spring, 1972)

Many women are being forced to re-evaluate their individual needs and potential in order to create a more self-fulfilling life for themselves in today's world. A woman may desire to explore new job opportunities, continuing education, volunteer work, or political activities available to her in her community. However, professional assistance is often needed to guide a woman in re-evaluating her abilities, exploring new interest areas, and aiding in the decision-making process. This program provides an opportunity for women and interested men of all ages to receive guidance during a three-day workshop designed to meet their individual needs:

1st Day

*Keynote speaker focusing on today's women
*Speakers on local and larger vocational opportunities for women
*Small group discussions with counselors
*Individual testing of vocational interests and self-concept

2nd Day

*Panel presenting educational opportunities for women in their community
*Speakers on volunteer and political opportunities for women
*Continuation of small group discussions

3rd Day

*Individual interpretation of interest and self-concept tests
*Special interest groups, such as resume writing
*Local career information and materials
*Summary and evaluation of the workshop

SECOND CAREERS FOR WOMEN

University of California, Riverside

A One-Day Workshop
Saturday, Feb. 20, 1972
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MORNING SESSION

Lecture: The Working Woman in American Society
Emily Card, Dept. of Political Science, UCR

Workshops: There will be workshops in eight different occupational areas (see below)

AFTERNOON SESSION

Lecture: The Underworld of the Work World
Theodora Wells, Consultant and Trainer to Business and Industry, Los Angeles

Workshops: There will be a repeat of the morning's workshops.

LIST OF WORKSHOPS

Each registrant may attend *two* workshops. Analyze your own abilities in terms of a possible "bridging" of fields: for example, a woman interested in guidance and counseling in schools would enroll in Workshops (4) and (6); someone who wishes to open a small restaurant would choose Workshops (2) and (8).

(1) COMMUNICATIONS—Writing, editing, graphic design, photography, public relations, advertising, radio and television.

(2) SECRETARIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUSINESS—Includes real estate, banking, escrow, insurance and individual business enterprises.

(3) PARAMEDICAL SERVICES—Community health care, laboratory work, nursing, physical therapy and related hospital services.

(4) HELPING SERVICES—The Agency Network, including social and welfare

services, probation and parole, corrections, mental health services, counseling, guidance.

(5) DATA PROCESSING, FINANCE AND MARKETING—Statistics, math, research, retailing.

(6) TEACHING, EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, LIBRARY SCIENCE AND RECREATION—All levels of teaching as well as teacher, library and recreational aides.

(7) PUBLIC SERVICE—County government, court-related employment, urban and environmental planning, elected offices, government boards and commissions.

(8) FINE AND APPLIED ARTS—Includes home economics (clothing, textiles, foods, nutrition and child development), interior decoration and crafts.

WOMAN-IN-RESIDENCE (University of Hawaii)

Continuing Education for Women presents the University of Hawaii's first Woman-in-residence, Dr. Kathryn Clarenbach.

You are welcome at these events:

Tuesday, Nov. 2, 1971—"The Changing Status of America's Women"
Wednesday, Nov. 3—"Getting the Facts about Women: Researching for Action"
Thursday, Nov. 4—"Strategies for Change in Women's Roles"
Tuesday, Nov. 9—"Problems of Equality Between Men and Women"
Wednesday, Nov. 10—"Women in Education"
Thursday, Nov. 11—Coffee Hour/Rap Session with Mature Students

WOMEN TODAY AND TOMORROW

George Washington University

"The Future of Marriage"	Jessie
"Educated Women in the Work Force"	Felice
"New Developments in Higher Education: Women's Studies"	Catharine
"A Look Ahead in CEW"	Ruth

A One-Day Conference
Saturday, June 10, 1972

Jessie Bernard, Ph.D., sociologist, author of THE SEX GAME; ACADEMIC WOMEN

Felice Schwartz, President of Catalyst, N.Y. Co-author of HOW TO GO TO WORK WHEN YOUR HUSBAND IS AGAINST IT, YOUR CHILDREN AREN'T OLD ENOUGH AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ANYHOW

Catharine P. Stimpson, Ph.D., Director, Women's Center, and Prof. of English, Barnard College

Ruth H. Osborn, Ed. D., Director, CEW, George Washington University

—Audience Participation—

CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

Institute of Awareness, Philadelphia

Sample
MINI LAB III
Wednesday, Sept. 15, '71

10 to 11 a.m.—choose one—

A. A GROUP EXPERIENCE—Coordinated by Dr. Matti Gershenfeld

B. LEADING TO AN EFFECTIVE, FUNCTIONING WOMAN—Esther Polen, attorney

C. TOWARD INTELLECTUAL MOVEMENTS OF THE MODERN WORLD—Dr. Stuart Samuels, Ass't Prof. of History, University of Pennsylvania

D. INDUCING PERSONAL GROWTH—Dr. Clorinda Margolis, director Consultation & Education, Jefferson Medical College Community Clinic

11 a.m. to 12 noon—choose one—

E. A GROUP EXPERIENCE—coordinated by Dr. Matti Gershenfeld

F. PERSONAL BODY AWARENESS—Ann Smith, author of STRETCH

G. OPENING THE GATES OF PERCEPTION THROUGH LITERATURE—Bobby Ellen Kimbel, fellowship in English & American Literature, Temple University

H. HOW SOCIETY EXERTS SOCIAL PRESSURE ON THE INDIVIDUAL—Richard Peters, M.A., Psychology, Bryn Mawr College

1 to 2 p.m. Guest Speaker: Lois Forer, Lawyer, author of NO ONE WILL LISTEN, on Consciousness-raising on Social Action

TODAY'S WOMAN—FAMILY AND FUTURE

State College, Pennsylvania

All-morning lecture-workshops
January 26-March 30, 1972

A morning program series especially for women:

"Getting to know me" instead of the familiar song lyrics "getting to know you" will be the unspoken thought on the minds of area women who attend this new and innovative program designed especially for today's women. Interesting, varied, and informative topics—programs which will allow time for questions and discussions—will be held Wednesday morning from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

WOMEN TODAY—An orientation to the thrust of the series, highlighted by a discussion of "How Did We Get Here, Where are We Going?"

GETTING TO KNOW ME—The "heart" of your future is you.

THE MANY ROLES OF A WOMAN—Focus on the varied roles you as a woman assume; parent, wife, community member, home manager.

WOMEN: CHALLENGE AND CHANGE—A frank discussion of issues affecting women today; social, economic, political and personal.

EXPO WOMEN—A smorgasbord of approaches to family, career, and the future.

TALENTS MATCHED WITH SERVICE—Explores volunteer opportunities for utilizing your talents, interests, and skills.

WORLD OF WORK, FACT AND FICTION—Discussion of re-entry, job availability, time flexibility, and new employment trends with an opportunity to learn about the availability of vocational aptitude testing.

NEW HORIZONS THROUGH EDUCATION—A broad survey of educational opportunities including workshops on education at home, county educational services, community based learning, and starting or continuing higher education.

PARTNER'S NIGHT—A family approach to understanding women today with a potluck dinner for you, your husband, and your older children.

BE YOURSELF—A summation of some alternatives open to today's women with focus on "what next?", personal goal-setting for the future.

SPECIAL OPEN DOOR SESSION—A full day when you can call or drop in to talk about you and your future.

ACTIVATING THE HUMAN POTENTIAL IN WOMEN

Lecture-workshop series.

University of California, Irvine
Sept. 23-Dec. 2 (Thurs., 9 a.m.-noon)

Dr. Robert S. Davidson
Coordinator

Women today have many new-found freedoms . . . . Changes in the societal role have given them greater scope to explore areas outside the home, higher education and cultural activities. But with all their interests and activities, most women, at some point in their lives, feel the need for a reassessment of themselves as persons; to explore their own inner capacities for a useful, happier life.

This course is designed to provide an opportunity for women to become aware of and begin expressing their potential capabilities in human relations and self-actualization. Participants explore their relationships with other people and examine possibilities for broader and more meaningful communication. They share experiences which heighten feelings of self-acceptance and sharpen their sense of identity.

Each lecture will be followed by a two-hour professionally led workshop. Utilizing self-discovered learning, participants will increase their fund of knowledge and skills and explore avenues for self-development.

HUMAN POTENTIALS (Sept. 23)—Overview of range of potential available to human beings with particular reference to women. Discussion of methods to help people activate this potential. Consideration of the blocking of potential by many of our social institutions.

PHYSIOLOGICAL POTENTIAL (Sept. 30)—The relationship between joy and health. The body's reaction to emotional blocking. Releasing body energy.

SOCIAL POTENTIAL (Oct. 7)—Possibilities for personal development in organizations, large or small. The values of group participation. The need for belonging.

PSYCHOLOGICAL POTENTIAL (Oct. 14)—Intellectual and emotional human possibilities and the necessity for integrating thinking and feelings.

SPIRITUAL POTENTIAL (Oct. 21)—New ways of thinking about religion. Transcending the normal boundaries and concepts of the self.

BECOMING AUTHENTIC

THE I-THOU RELATIONSHIP (Oct. 28)—The concept of congruence. The real self versus the roles we play. Can we afford to be genuine?

Panel Discussion by All Lecturers

COMMUNICATION: DEFENSIVE OR MUTUAL (Nov. 4)—Listening for the meanings behind words. Non-verbal ways of communicating. Sending conflicting messages.

BETRAYAL OF THE BODY (Nov. 11)—The dangers of losing body sensations by over emphasizing the intellect. Theories and methods of Alexander Lowen concerning the proper use of the body.

BASIC NEEDS AND HUMAN VALUES (Nov. 18)—The need for recognition, self-esteem, belongingness, caring, varied experience, physical contact. Cultural blocks to these needs.

ACTUALIZING HUMAN POTENTIAL (Dec. 2)—Discussion of methods for putting potential to work. How to maintain one's authenticity. Personal reactions to the experience of this course.

Panel Discussion by All Lecturers

EDITOR'S QUERY TO READERS: What about it? *Are* such courses too "kicky" or "cutsie pie"—as Ms. Del Drago was *told* (above, p. 95)—as they strive for relevance (and *paying* customers)? Where are the "flyspeck academic concerns" here?—BC.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A UNIQUE INTERDISCIPLINARY ARCHIVE: THE WOMEN'S HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

Women's History Research Center* Laura Murra, Director
Berkeley, California Helen Dutton, Reference Librarian

The Women's History Library in Berkeley is an archive of material by and about the current women's movement as well as about the lives of women in many countries today and in the past. Our material is divided into several distinct departments, all of which interrelate and emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of the study of women.

I. TOPICAL FILE SYSTEM

Within the Topical File System are 2,000 individual file folders filled with information on both the historical and current issues which relate to women. This system is divided into the following categories:

A. Women in Countries and Ethnic Groups
B. Women in History
C. Men and Women's Liberation
D. Non-Women's-Liberation Women's Groups
E. Projects and Services
F. Protest and Events
G. Women in Roles
H. Specific Women
I. Subjects
J. Women's Liberation Groups
K. Women's Fiction and Works
L. Mass Periodicals
Q. Women's Liberation Movement Issues
R. Bibliographies and Course Outlines

II. THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S PERIODICAL ARCHIVE

The periodicals in this collection have been produced by women as a forum for their comments on the issues which affect their lives. We have over 550 titles, some of which have been microfilmed by Bell and Howell and are now being marketed by them as HERSTORY COLLECTION. The periodical archive is being continued and maintained with the royalties from the sale of the microfilm, and college work-study student funds.

We must be sent three copies of each issue; one is archived for future microfilming, and the other two are read carefully as each article is classified and cut for the topical file system.

III. BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, GOVERNMENT BULLETINS, SMALL PRESS POETRY

Our Library contains about 2,000 books and 1,000 pamphlets and government bulletins. All of this material has been donated by the author, the publisher or friends of the Library. Some of the authors who have donated material include Berenice Carroll, Betty Chmaj, Ruth Ginsberg, Florence Howe, Gerda Lerner and Anne Firor Scott. The publishers range from the Feminist Press to such older firms as Doubleday.

**Editor's Note:* After visiting this unique center now located in Berkeley, I asked Laura X to submit a brief description of its incredibly varied holdings. I myself got lost for hours in File G, "Women In Roles," of the Topical File System, this being the file closest in approach to that of Part III of this book. The very existence of such a library—one so ambitious in scope and refreshingly different from other libraries in its filing system, especially responsive to the interests of scholars with a bent toward the interdisciplinary and the contemporary—seems to me to be symptomatic of the fresh approaches women's studies are bringing to scholarship generally. Symptomatic too, and dishearteningly so, is the difficulty the dedicated individuals involved have faced in their efforts to raise funds and appeal to volunteers to keep this remarkable project alive—a diffifulty which has driven the women close to the point of desperation. Helen Dutton composed the statement which appears here—BC.

The books and pamphlets are arranged by the following topics:

Recent Movement Literature
Poetry
Art
Graphics
Photography
Black Women
Labor and Economics
Education
Sexuality
Prostitution
Lesbianism
Birth Control
Abortion
Health
Love
Law
Marriage and Divorce
Family
History
Autobiographies
Diaries and Letters
Women in Politics
American Women
Biographies
Children's Books
Fiction
Plays and Literary Criticism
Reference

IV. ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Because we are primarily concerned with what women are saying about themselves in relation to the issues which confront them, we have also collected tape recordings of oral testimonies, songs, speeches and panel discussions. In 1971 this project produced the WOMEN'S SONG BOOK, now out of print. The project is seeking funds to continue to collect material and reprint the songbook.

V. HOW TO USE AND SUPPORT THE LIBRARY

Our resources are by librarians, scholars, activists, teachers, high school students and all who are interested in teaching themselves and others about women. At the present time because of our funding limitations, the Library is open only to members—that is, anyone who volunteers time on a regular basis, who donates office supplies, or who contributes at least $10 per year.

The variety of resources enables a researcher to investigate a subject in many ways. For example, someone interested in women in politics would find files in the Women in History section on the "Equal Rights Amendment," "National Women's Party," or "Suffragettes." Books on women in politics and women's political views are available, as are women's newsletters concerned primarily with women and/in politics, for instance, all issues of THE WOMAN ACTIVIST. Tape recordings of women's political speeches may be available, and our directory of films might list films by women about politics.

We depend on individual donations (mostly women's) to meet our operational costs. Most of our staff expenses have been underwritten by the federal college work-study program. Through this program we pay only 20 or 30% of each student's salary, which we must raise through donations. The demand for our material continually expands and we need volunteers to help us because our funding sources are limited.

More information about publications of the Library and volunteer positions can be obtained by sending a donation and a self-addressed envelope to 2325 Oak Street, Berkeley, California 94708.

VI. AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS:

THE CATALOG: a source index which includes the addresses from which the listed materials may be ordered. The complete CATALOG is available to individual women for $16 (includes postage and handling), and to institutions, organizations and groups for $20. Parts of the CATALOG are also available separately to *individual women only:* Index as of July, 1969—$1; Packet of Action Projects as of September, 1969—$5; Addenda to index as of January, 1970—$2; Addenda to Index as of March, 1971—$7.

CATALOG SECTION UPDATES (discount prices below to individual women only)

—DIRECTORY OF WOMEN'S PERIODICALS (1971): $3 to individual women, $10 to institutions, groups and organizations.

—INDEX by topic of WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSE OUTLINES (1971), and contacts for them: $3/$5.

—INDEX by topic of BIBLIOGRAPHIES (1972), and contacts for them: $2/$2.

—LIST of people doing RESEARCH PROJECTS (1971): $1/$2; (Update will be $3/$4).

—TAPE ARCHIVE INDEX (1971): $1.20/$2; (Update will be $3/$4).

—DIRECTORY of FILMS by and about WOMEN (1972): 75 page book, $3/$5.

—FEMALE ARTISTS PAST AND PRESENT (1972): $3/$4.

—NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN NEWSLETTER DIRECTORY (1971): $3.

—XEROX of our index cards on RAPE (1972): $25.

—XEROX of our index cards on ABORTION (1972): $25.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

—WOMEN'S SONGBOOK (1971) (prepaid orders for a second printing: $2.50 including postage/$3.

—SYNOPSIS OF WOMEN IN WORLD HISTORY (1969): $1.20/$2.

—SPAZM, the Library's Newsletter (April to December, 1969): only national record of that period, 30 issues $15/$20; single issues 70c plus postage.

—A DIRECTORY OF GAY WOMEN'S PERIODICALS (1972): 25c plus self-addressed stamped envelope.

MICROFILM PUBLISHING PROJECT:

The INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY PERIODICAL ARCHIVE is available on microfilm through Bell & Howell, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Your local library can now have this collection of women's liberation, and women's civic, religious, professional, peace newsletters, newspapers and journals from all over the world, through October 1, 1971. *Urge your library to subscribe* by writing Bell & Howell ($550 for over 20 rolls).

CHAPTER ONE

American Women and The American Character

DAVID M. POTTER

There is an old riddle which children used to ask one another concerning two Indians. One was a big Indian, the other was a little Indian, and they were sitting on a fence. The little Indian, the riddle tells us, was the big Indian's son, but the big Indian was not the little Indian's father. How, asks the riddle, can this be?

Boys and girls for a long time have found that this riddle succeeds very well in mystifying many people. And the fact that it does presents another puzzle as to why the riddle is hard to answer. If we were to state the question in more general terms: there are two human beings, one adult and one child; the child is the son of the adult, but the adult is not the father of the child, probably no one would have much difficulty in recognizing that the adult is the mother. Why then do the Indians on a fence perplex us?

If we examine the structure of the riddle, I think we will find that it contains two devices which inhibit our recognition that the big Indian is a female. First, the two Indians are described as being in a very specific situation—they are sitting on a fence. But women, at least in our culture, do not usually sit on fences; if the two Indians had been roasting some ears of corn, or mending their teepee, how much easier the riddle would have been. Second, we are perhaps especially prone to think of Indians as masculine. If the riddle had said two South Sea Islanders, or perhaps, two Circassians, the possibility of their being female might occur to us much more easily.

But most of all, the riddle owes its baffling effect to the fact that our social generalization is mostly in masculine terms. If we said that the little Indian is the big Indian's daughter, but that the big Indian is not the little Indian's mother, the possibility that the big Indian is the father would come to mind readily enough. For in our culture, men are still in a general category, while women are in a special category.

When we speak of mankind, we mean men and women collectively, but when we speak of womankind, we mean the ladies, God bless them. The word humanity is itself derived from "homo," that is man, and the species is "Homo sapiens." Neuter nouns or general nouns which are ambiguous as to sex—nouns like infant, baby, child, sibling, adolescent, adult, spouse, parent, citizen, person, individual, etc.,—all take masculine pronouns. In our culture, a woman, at marriage, takes her husband's name. Though born a Cabot, if she marries Joe Doaks, Mrs. Joe Doaks she becomes and Mrs. Doaks she remains, usually for the rest of her life.

This masculine orientation is to be expected, of course, in a society which is traditionally and culturally male-dominated—in what we call a patriarchal rather than a matriarchal society. Even women themselves have connived at maintaining the notion of masculine ascendancy, and in the rather numerous concrete situations in which they actually dominate their men, they often dis-simulate their control by pretending to be weak, dependent, or "flighty." In such a situation one must expect that men will be regarded as the normative fitures in the society, and that, in popular thought at least, the qualities of the masculine component in the society will pass for the qualities of the society as a whole.

If this habit were confined to popular thought, it would hardly be worth examining. But it also sometimes creeps into academic and scholarly thought, which ought to have more rigor, and when it does so, it can sometimes distort our picture of society. Thus a writer may sometimes make observations on the traits or values of American men, and then may generalize these as the traits or values of the American people. If he did this deliberately, on the theory that since male values dominate the society, they must therefore be American values, we would have to concede that when he does so unconsciously, his method may easily lead him to assume first that since American men are dominant, the characteristics of American men are the characteristics of the American people, and that since women are people, the characteristics of the American people are the characteristics of American women, or in short, that the characteristics of American men are the characteristics of American women.

To avoid this trap, when one meets with a social generalization it is frequently worthwhile to ask concretely, does it apply to women, or only to women, or only to the masculine component in the population? Does the statement that Prussians are domineering mean that Prussian women are domineering, or only Prussian men? Does the statement that Americans are individualistic mean American women as well as American men?

The question seems worth asking, for it appears more than possible that many of our social generalizations which are stated sweepingly to cover the entire society are in fact based on the masculine population, and that if we took the feminine population into account, the generalization might have to be qualified, or might even run in an entirely different direction.

I

A notable example of this can perhaps be found in Frederick Jackson Turner's famous frontier hypothesis, stated so brilliantly at Chicago almost seventy years ago.

The gist of Turner's argument was, of course, that the frontier had been a basic influence in shaping the character of the American people. Primarily, as he saw it, the frontier provided economic opportunity in the form of free land. When this free land was suddenly conferred upon a people who had previously been held in dependence by the land monopolies of the Old World, it made the American economically independent and this independence made him more individualistic and more egalitarian in his attitudes. Also, the necessity for subduing the wilderness by his own personal exertions, in a situation where he could not call upon doctors, dentists, policemen, lawyers, contractors, well-drillers, repairmen, soil analysts, and other specialists to aid him, made him more self-reliant.

* From AMERICAN CHARACTER AND CULTURE: SOME TWENTIETH CENTURY PERSPECTIVES, edited by John A. Hague (DeLand, Florida: Everett/Edwards, Inc., 1964.) Copyright 1964 by Everett/Edwards, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, granted in a letter to Betty E. Chmaj, Sept 7,

1971. The paragraphing used in the Hague volume has been broken up for ease of reading in the version reprinted here, and boldface footnotes have been added to refer to the chapter that follows, "Answers to Potter's 'American Women and the American Character.' " Potter's own footnotes appear at the end of his essay.—BC.

Not even Turner's harshest critics deny that there was much truth in his observations, but many of them have pointed to his lack of precision, and it is fair to question to what extent they applied restrictively to frontier men. Sometimes it becomes clear that the life-process which he identifies with the frontier was primarily though not wholly an experience shared by men rather than by women.

There is one famous passage, for instance, which begins, "The wilderness masters the colonist." Now *colonist* is a neuter noun, and could apply to a female colonist. But the passage continues to say that the wilderness, finding the colonist "European in dress, industry, modes of travel, and thought, . . . takes him from the railroad car and puts him in a birch canoe [this sounds progressively less as if it could be a woman]. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the mocassin."[1] Soon, this colonist hears the call of the wild almost as clearly as Jack London's dog, and what he does, "he shouts the war cry and takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion." Here, at least, the pioneer in question is hardly a woman.

Certainly it is true that the frontier offered economic opportunity, and certainly, also, frontier women shared in some of the social consequences which flowed from the fact that this opportunity was available to their men. But is it not true, in cold fact, that the opportunities offered by the West were opportunities for men and not in any direct sense, opportunities for women? The free acres of the West were valuable to those who could clear, and break, and plow and harvest them. But clearing and breaking, plowing and harvesting were men's work, in which women rarely participated. The nuggets of gold in the streambeds of California in 1849 represented opportunity to those who could prospect for them. But the life of the prospector and the sourdough was not a woman's life, and the opportunities were not women's opportunities.

Similarly, the grass-covered plateau of the Great Plains represented economic opportunity for those who could use it as an open range for the holding and grazing of Longhorn cattle. But the individuals who could do this were men; the Cattle Kingdom was a man's world. Thus, when Turner says that "so long as free land exists, the opportunity for a competency exists," he means, in effect, an opportunity for males.

Again, it may bear repeating, there is no question here that the frontier influenced women as well as men. It had its Molly Pitcher and its Jemima Boone, as well as its Davy Crockett, and its Kit Carson. It left its stamp upon the pioneer women as well as the pioneer men. But when Turner states that it furnished "a new field of opportunity, a gate of escape from the bondage of the past," one must ask, exactly what was the nature of women's participation in this opportunity?

Before this question can be analyzed, it is perhaps necessary to recognize that women's place in our society is invariably complicated by the fact that they have, as men do not, a dual status. Almost every woman shares the status of the men in her family—her father or her husband—and if this is a privileged position, she is a recipient of some of the privilege. This is an affiliated status, but if her man gain, she gains with them. Thus, if her family became landowners on the frontier, she participated in their advancement, and no one can deny that free land was, in this indirect sense, opportunity for her also.

But woman also has a personal status, which is a sex status, as a female. As a female, on the frontier, women were especially dependent upon having a man in the family, for there was no division of labor there, as there was in settled communities, and most of the tasks of the frontier—the hunting, the wood-chopping, the plowing—could hardly be performed by women, though many of them, of course, rose to these tasks in time of emergency.[1] In fact, the frontier was brutally harsh for females, and it furnished its own verdict on its differential impact upon the sexes. "This country," said the frontier aphorism, "is all right for men and dogs, but it's hell on women and horses."

If we accept Turner's own assumption that economic opportunity is what matters, and that the frontier was significant as the context within which economic opportunity occurred, then we must observe that for American women, as individuals, opportunity began pretty much where the frontier left off.[3] For opportunity lay in access to independent employment, and the employments of the frontier were not primarily accessible to women. But in the growing cities, opportunities for female employment began to proliferate.[4] Where the work of the frontier called for the strong back and the powerful muscles of a primeval man, the work of the city—clerical work, secretarial work, the tending of machines—has called for the supple fingers and the ready adaptability of a young woman,[16] and it was in this environment, for the first time in America, that women found on any scale worth mentioning, access to independent earning power.[4]

Once woman possessed access to such earning power, whether she used it or not, the historic basis for her traditional subordination has been swept away.[4] The male monopoly upon jobs was broken, and the breaking of this monopoly was no less significant for American women than the breaking of the landlord's monopoly upon fertile soil had been for American pioneer men. As a symbol, the typewriter evokes fewer emotions than the plow, but like the plow, it played a vital part in the fulfillment of the American promise of opportunity and independence. The wilderness may have been the frontier for American men, and the cabin in the clearing the symbol of their independence, but the city was the frontier for American women and the business office was what gave them economic independence and the opportunity to follow a course of their own.[5]

II

Another social generalization which is often stated as if it applied to all Americans, men and women alike, is that our society has experienced a vast transformation in the occupational activities of its people, and that we have passed from the independent, self-directed work, of the kind done by a land-owning farmer, to the regimented, externally-directed activity of the employee who labors for pay.

In 1850, 63% of the gainfully employed workers in the United States were engaged in agriculture, and a high proportion of these were land-owning farmers—perhaps as nearly independent as people can be. In the past the farmer, more than most of his fellows, was in position to plan, decide, and act for himself—to maintain his own values without regard for the approval or disapproval of his fellow man, to work at his own pace, to set his own routine. But today, as the census figures show, the American who labors is no longer self-employed. In 1958, it was estimated that 50,000,000 people gainfully employed in the United States received salaries or wages, while only 8,000,000 were self-employed, which means that in general the American worker does not work for himself. He works under direction in an office or a factory. He does not decide what to do, when to do it, or for what purpose, but he waits for instructions which come to him through channels. Even the junior executive, despite his prestige, it no more a self-employed man than the factory worker, and if we may believe THE ORGANIZATION MAN, he is, in fact, considerably less independent after hours. With these ideas in mind, we speak in broad terms about the disappearance of the old forms of autonomous, self-directed activity.

Yet none of this applies in any sense to women, except for women who are employees, and although female employment has increased steadily to a point where nearly one-third of all women are employed it is still true that two out of three American women are not employees.[6] but find their occupation chiefly in the maintaining of homes and the rearing of children. Millions of housewives continue to exercise personal choice and decision not only in arranging their own time-table and routine but also in deciding what food the family shall have and how it shall be prepared, what articles of purchase shall have the highest priority on the family budget, and, in short, how the home shall be operated. Despite strong tendencies toward conformity in American life, it is clear that American women exercise a very wide latitude of decision in these matters, and everyone knows that there are great variations between the regimes in various American homes. Indeed it seems fairly evident that the housewife of today, with the wide range of consumer goods available for purchase and the wide variety of mechanical devices to free her from drudgery, has a far broader set of alternatives[2] for household procedure than the farm wife of two or three generations ago.[7]

Moreover there are now great numbers of women working independently in their own homes, who a generation ago would have been working very much under direction as domestic servants in the homes of other women. If we based our social generalizations upon the experience of women rather than that of men, we might drop the familiar observation about the decreasing independence of Americans in their occupational pursuits. Instead we might emphasize that in the largest single occupational group in the country—the group which cooks and rears children and keeps house—there is a far greater measure of independent and self-directed work than there was in the past.[7]

III

Closely connected to this question of the disappearance of the independent worker is another commonplace generalization, namely that the American people have become the victims of extreme specialization. Everyone is familiar with the burden of this lament: American industry has forced the craftsman to abandon his craft, and with it the satisfaction of creative labor, and has reduced him to operating a machine or to performing a single operation on the assembly-line as if he were a machine himself. Further, the complaint continues, modern conditions provide fewer and fewer opportunities for a worker to be an all-round person of varied skills and resources, as the American farmer used to be, and instead conditions make of him a diminished person, a narrow specialist hardly fit for anything save his narrow specialty.

Despite the exaggerated and somewhat hackneyed character of this outcry, it contains an important element of truth as regards the work of American male workers. But this generalization, too, is in fact applicable largely to the male component in the population rather than to the American people as a whole.

For the American housewife is not a specialist, and in fact her modern role requires that she be far more versatile than her grandmother was,[8] despite the greater skill of the grandmother in cooking, sewing, and other household crafts. A good housewife today must not only serve food to please the family palate, but must also know about calories, vitamins, and the principles of a balanced diet. She must also be an economist, both in her knowledge of the quality of the products offered to her and in her ability to do the impossible with a budget. She must not only maintain a comfortable home, but must also possess enough skill in interior decoration to assure that her own menage will not seem dowdy or unappealing by comparison with the latest interiors show in Hollywood films. She must not only rear children, but must also have mastered enough child psychology to be able to spare the rod and still not spoil the child. She must not only get the children ready for school, but must also, in many cases, act as a kind of transportation manager, participating in an elaborate car pool to convey them to and fro.

In addition to all this, society now enjoins her not to rely upon the marriage vows to hold her husband, but to keep her personality and her appearance so attractive that he will have no incentive to stray. Whatever else she may be, she is certainly not a specialist,[8] and even if she fails to meet all these varied demands upon her, her mere effort to do so would remove her from the category of specialist. If we based our social generalizations upon women rather than upon men, we might quite justifiably affirm that the modern age is an age of diversified activity rather than an age of specialization.[9]

IV

The profound difference between the patterns of men's work and women's work are seldom understood by most men and perhaps even by most women. In terms of the time-tables of life, however, the contrasts are almost startling. For instance, man usually begins work in the early twenties, labors at precisely timed intervals for eight hours a day and five days a week, until he is sixty-five, when his life as a worker may be cut off with brutal abruptness and he is left idle.

Woman also usually begins work in the early twenties, perhaps in an office on the same time-table as a man, but after a very few years she becomes a wife, whose work is keeping house, and mother whose work is rearing children. As such she labors often for from fifty-one to fifty-six hours a week, and she does not have the alternation of work and leisure which help to lend variety and pace to the life of her husband. Her work-load will continue to be heavier than her husband's until the children are older, after which it will gradually diminish, and she may ultimately re-enter employment. But most women do not;[1] they continue to keep house. And as long as a woman does keep house, either as a wife or as a widow, she never experiences the traumatic, sudden transition from daily work as the focus of life to enforced idleness—the transition which we call retirement.[10]

Another far reaching consequence of the difference between man's work and woman's work is forcibly expressed in a recent public interest advertisement in HARPER'S MAGAZINE by Frank R. Neu, entitled "We May Be Sitting Ourselves to Death." Neu presents some very impressive data about the poor physical fitness of a large percentage of American men, and about the deleterious effects of the sedentary life of Mr. Joe Citizen as an office worker whose principal exercise is to go around a golf course on an electric cart on the week-end. Then Mr. Neu says "Let's consider Jill, Joe's wife, for a moment. Chances are, on the basis of current statistics, Jill will outlive Joe by anywhere from five to 25 years. Medical science is not sure yet whether this is because Jill has different hormones from Joe or whether it is a result of the different roles which Joe and Jill fulfill in our society.

"The average suburban Jill is likely to be a home-maker responsible for rearing two or more children. It is safe to assume that any woman with this responsibility is going to get a lot of daily exercise no matter how many gadgets she has to help her do the housework. A home-maker does a lot of walking each day merely to push the buttons and start the machines that wash the clothes, cook the meals, and remove the dust. And she also does a good deal of bending each day to pick up after Joe and the junior members of the family. All in all, Jill is likely to get much more exercise than Joe. This may have a significant relationship to Jill's outliving Joe, who no longer hikes the dusty trial to bring home the buffalo meat and hides to feed and clothe his family."[4]

In the light of differences so great that they may radically alter the duration of life, it is again evident that a serious fallacy results when generalizations derived from the experience of American men are applied indiscriminately to the American people in such a way as to exclude the experience of American women.

V

As a further illustration of the readiness with which one can fall into a fallacy in this way, let me suggest one more generalization about Americans which has been widely popular in recent years. This is the proposition, formulated by David Riesman in THE LONELY CROWD, that the American has been transformed, in the past century, from an inner-directed individual to an other-directed individual. A century or so ago, the argument runs, the American learned certain values from his elders, in his youth. He internalized these values, as matters of principle, so that, in Riesman's phrase, they served as a kind of gyroscope to hold him on his course, and he stood by them throughout his life whether they were popular or unpopular. When these values were involved, he did not hesitate to go against the crowd. Thus he was inner-directed. But today, says Riesman, in a universe of rapidly changing circumstances, where the good will of our associates is more important to our success than it ever was to the nineteenth-century farmer, the American no longer internalizes his values in the old way. Instead, he responds very perceptively, very sensitively, to the values of others, and adjusts his course to meet their expectations. Indeed their expectations are a kind of radar-screen for his guidance. Thus he is other-directed, or to use an older and less precise term, he is much more a conformist.

Riesman does not discuss whether his thesis about "the changing American character" is applicable to American women, as well as to American men. But we are entitled to ask, does he really believe that American women were so inner-directed as his analysis would suggest? Perhaps yes, if you believe that women have been more steadfast than men in defending the values on which the security of the home is based.[5]

But on the other hand, woman, historically, was a dependent person, and as a dependent person, she developed a most perceptive sensitivity to the expectations of others and a responsiveness in adapting herself to the moods and interests of others. She has always had a radar screen. If women are quicker to conform to the expectations of a group of other women than men are to a group of other men, and if we should say that this has been true in the past, what it would mean is that women have been other-directed all along, and that when Riesman says Americans are becoming other-directed, what he means is that American men are becoming other-directed. As women gain more economic and social independence, it might be supposed in terms of Riesman's own analysis, that more than half of the American people are becoming less other-directed rather than more so. With the gradual disappearance of the so-called "clinging vine" type, who dared not call her soul her own, this is, in fact, apparently just what is happening.[11]

VI

If many of the generalizations which apply to American men, and which purport to apply to Americans generally, do not actually apply to American women, anyone who attempts to study the American character is forced to ask: to what extent has the impact of American historical experience been the same for both sexes, and to what extent has it been dissimilar?

Viewed in these terms, the answer would probably have to be a balanced one. Certainly the main values that have prevailed in American society—the belief in individualism, the belief in equality, the belief in progress, have shaped the thought of American women as well as of American men, and American women are no doubt more committed to individualism, and to equality, and to progress, than women in many other societies. But on the other hand, some of the major forces that have been at work in American history have impinged upon men and upon women in differential ways. For instance, as I have already suggested, the frontier placed a premium upon qualities of brute strength and of habituation to physical danger which women did not possess in the same degree as men, either for biological or for cultural reasons. The result has been a differential historical experience for American men and American women which must be analyzed if there is any basis to be found for asserting that there are differences in the character types of the two sexes.

What then, we might ask, have been the principal transformations that history has brought in the lives of American women? Surprisingly enough, this is largely an unexplored field, but there are certain answers which appear more or less self-evident.

One of these is that our society has, during the last century and a half, found ways to do most of its heavy work without the use of human brawn and muscle. Waterpower, steam power, electric power, jet power, and the power of internal combustion have largely eliminated the need for brute strength and great physical stamina in most forms of work. This transformation has emancipated men to a revolutionary degree, but it has even more strikingly emancipated women, for women are physiologically smaller than men, and they lack the muscular strength and physical endurance of men. As the factor of hard work is reduced and the factor of skill is enhanced, therefore, women have found that inequality in ability to meet the requirements of work is greatly diminished. This basic fact, by itself, has probably done more than anything else to promote the equality of women.

But if this is the most fundamental effect of the mechanization of work, mechanization has also had a number of other sweeping consequences. One of these is that it has destroyed the subsistence farm as a unit of American life, and the disappearance of the subsistence farm in turn, has had the most far-reaching implications.

To appreciate this, we must remember what life was like on the subsistence farm. The only division of labor that existed in this unit was the primitive division between men and women. The men constructed the dwelling, planted and cultivated the crops, raised the cattle and hogs and poultry, sheared the sheep, and chopped wood for the stoves and fireplaces. In short the man was the producer—the producer of food, of fuel, of the raw materials for clothing. The farm wife, in turn, not only cooked, kept house, and cared for the children, as modern wives still do, but she also performed certain other tasks. She used ashes to make her own soap, she put up vast quantities of preserved food, she spun fibers into cloth, and made cloth into garments. In economic terms, she and her daughters were processors. Together, they worked in a small, closeknit community, in which all lived very much together.

It hardly needs saying what happened to this typical unit of life in an earlier America. The use of machinery, the increased specialization of labor, and the development of an economy of exchange superseded it, and rendered it almost obsolete. Today a limited number of farmers with machines raise enough food for the entire population. Men go out to work instead of working on their own place, with their own sons, and their reward is not a harvest but a weekly wage or a monthly salary. Instead of "making a living" they make an income. All this is obvious, and oft-repeated. But what are the implications for the American woman?

Some embittered critics have retorted that modern woman, no longer a processor of goods, has lost her economic function, and that she retains only a biological function as mate and mother and a social function in the family. This loss of function, they would say, accounts for the frustration and sense of futility which seems to plague modern woman even more than it does modern man. But if we take a hard look at this argument, clearly it will not stand up. What has happened is that women have acquired a new role, in a new division of labor. With her husband away from the home, held by the compulsions of the clock, it falls to her, first of all, to use the family's income to take care of the family's needs. In short, while her husband has changed from a producer to an earner, she has changed from a processor to a consumer in a society where consumption is an increasingly important economic function.

The responsibilities of the consumer are no mean task. To handle them successfully, a person must be something of a dietitian, a judge of the quality of many goods, a successful planner, a skillful decorator, and a budget manager. The business of converting a monthly sum of money into a physical basis for a pleasant life involves a real art, and it might be counted as a major activity even if there were not children to rear and meals to prepare. But the increased specialization of the work of men at offices and factories away—frequently far away—from the home has also shifted certain cultural duties and certain community tasks in ever-greater measure to women.

In the Old World, upper-class men, claiming leisure as the principal advantage of their status, have made themselves the custodians of culture and the leaders in the cultural life of their communities. In America, upper-class men, primarily businessmen, working more compulsively and for longer hours than any other class, have resigned their cultural responsibilities to women and then have gone on to disparage literature and the arts because these pursuits, in the hands of females, began to seem feminine. Women have shouldered the responsibility, have borne the condescension with which their cultural activities were often treated, have provided the entire teaching force for the elementary schools, and most of the force for the secondary schools, and have done far more than their share to keep community life alive. This is another of the results, impinging in a differential way upon women, of the great social transformation of the last two centuries.

VII

So far as we have examined them, all of these changes would seem to operate somewhat to the advantage of woman, to have an emancipating effect, and to diminish her traditional subordination. No longer handicapped by a labor system in which biceps are at a premium, she has moved into the realms of employment, and has even pre-empted the typewriter and the teacher's desk as her own. If she has exercised a choice, which she never had before, and has decided to remain in her home, she has encountered a new economic role as a consumer rather than as a processor, with a broad range of activities, and with a new social role in keeping up the vigor of the community activities. In either case, the orbit of her activities is far wider than what used to be regarded as women's sphere, and it has been wide enough in fact to lead some optimistic observers to speak of the equality of women as if it were something which had reached some kind of absolute fulfillment and completeness about the time of the ratification of the woman's suffrage amendment in 1920.

Yet before we conclude our story with the ending that they all lived happily ever after, it is necessary to face up to the fact that women have not found all these changes quite as emancipating as they were expected to be. Indeed, much of the serious literature about American women is pessimistic in tone, and makes the dissatisfactions and sexual frustration of modern American women its principal theme.[12] Great stress is laid upon the fundamental dilemma that sexual fulfillment seems to depend upon one set of psychological attitudes—attitudes of submissiveness and passivity—while the fulfillment of equality seems to depend upon an opposite set—attitudes of competitiveness and self-assertion.

At its grimmest level, this literature stresses the contention of Sigmund Freud that women instinctively envy the maleness of a man and reject their own sex. There is no doubt that these psychoanalytic views are important and that attention to questions of the sex life of an individual is basic, but a very respectable argument can be and has been made that what women envy about men is not their maleness in purely sexual terms but their dominance in the society and their immunity from the dilemmas which the needs of sexual and biological fulfillment on one hand and of personal fulfillment on the other pose for women.[b] The inescapable fact that males can have offspring without either bearing them or rearing them means that the values of family life and of personal achievement can be complementary for men, where they are conflicting values for women.[13]

This one immutable and timeless fact, more than anything else, seems to stand forever in the way of the complete and absolute equality of men and women. Political and legal emancipation and even the complete equality of women in social relations and in occupational opportunities could not remove this handicap. So long as it remains, therefore, no one who finds a measure of inequality still remaining will have to look for an explanation in social terms. But it is legitimate to ask whether this is the only remaining barrier to emancipation, or whether other factors also serve to maintain adverse differentials against woman, even in America, where she seems to be more nearly equal than she has been in any other time or place, except perhaps in certain matriarchal tribes.

There are, perhaps, two aspects of woman's role as housekeeper and as consumer which also contribute, in a new way historically, to work against the prevailing tendencies toward a fuller equality. These aspects have, in a subtle way, caused society to devalue the modern activities of women as compared with those of men, and thus may even have contributed to bring about a new sort of subordination.

One of these is the advent of the money economy, in which income is the index of achievement, and the housewife is the only worker who does not get paid. On the farm home, in the days of the subsistence economy, neither she nor her husband got paid, at least not very much, and they were economic partners in the enterprise of making a living. But today, the lowliest and most trivial job which pays a wage counts as employment, while the most demanding and vital tasks which lack the sanction of pecuniary remuneration do not so count.

A recent, and in fact very able book entitled WOMEN WHO WORK deals, just as you would expect, not with women who work, but with the women who get paid for their work. Sociologists regard it as an axiom that the amount of income is as important as any other criterion in measuring social status today, and in one sense, a woman's status may reflect the income of her husband, but in another sense it should be a corollary of the axiom that if income is esteemed, lack of income is followed by lack of esteem, and even by a lack of self-esteem. If it needed proving, Komarovsky has shown that the American housewife tends to disparage herself as well as her work, as both being unworthy because they do not receive recognition in terms of cash income.[12]

If woman does not command respect as an earner, she is also likely to incur a certain subtle lack of respect for herself in her role as a consumer. For there is a strong tendency in some phases of American advertising to regard the consumer as someone who may be flattered or may be bullied, but who need not be treated as a mature person. Insofar as the consumer is an object of condescension, someone to be managed rather than someone to be consulted, someone on whom the will of the advertiser is to be imposed by psychological manipulation, and insofar as consumers are primarily women, it means that women become the objects of more than their share of the low esteem in which the consumer is held, and more than their share of the stultifying efforts to play upon human yearnings for prestige and popularity or upon human psychological insecurities.

Anyone who recalls the recent publications about the rate at which the blinking of women's eyes increases when they view the display of goods in a supermarket,[a] and the extent to which this display causes them to spend impulsively, rather than according to need, will recognize that the role of the consumer has not enhanced the dignity of women.[13] This aspect was very clearly and wittily recognized by Sylvia Wright in an article in HARPERS in 1955, in which she dealt ironically with the assertation, which we sometimes hear, that America has become a woman's world.[a]

"Whatever it is," she wrote, "I'll thank you to stop saying it's mine.[14] If it were a woman's world, people wouldn't yammer at me so much. They're always telling me to do, be, or make something. . . .

"The one thing they don't want me to be is me. 'A few drops of Abano Bath Oil' they say, 'and you're not you . . . you're Somebody New lolling in perfumed luxury.' But I'm not allowed to loll long. The next minute I have to spring out in order to be Fire and Ice, swathed in satin, not a thing to do but look stark, and wait for a man to pounce. Turn the page, I've got to make sure it's Johnson's cotton buds with which I swab the baby. A few pages later, the baby gets into the act yelling for fullweight diapers . . .

"I'm supposed to use a lot of make-up to keep my husband's love, but I must avoid make-up clog. I'm supposed to be gay, spontaneous and outgoing, but I musn't get 'expression lines.' (Expression lines are to wrinkles as morticians are to undertakers.)

"In the old days, I only had to have a natural aptitude for cooking, cleaning, bringing up children, entertaining, teaching Sunday School and tatting . . .

"Now I also have to reconstitute knocked-down furniture and build on porches."

If woman's status is somewhat confused today, therefore, it is partly because, at the very time when efforts to exploit her as a female began to abate, the efforts to exploit her as a consumer began to increase. And at the time when the intrinsic value of her work was gaining in dignity as compared with that of the male, the superficial value as measured in terms of money income was diminishing. The essential strength of her position has increased, but the combined effect of the manipulation by the media and the emphasis upon monetary earning as a standard for the valuation of work has threatened her with a new kind of subordination, imposed by the system of values which she herself accepts, rather than by masculine values imposed upon her against her will.

If a woman as a consumer in a world of producers and as an unpaid worker in a world of salaried employees has lost some of the ground she had gained by emancipation as a female in a world of males, even the emancipation itself has created some new problems for her. For instance, it has confronted her with a dilemma she never faced in the days when she was confined to her own feminine sphere. This is the dilemma that she is now expected to attain a competence in the realm of men's affairs but that she must never succeed in this realm too much. It is well for her to be intelligent, but not intelligent enough to make a young man feel inferior; well for her to find employment and enjoy it, but not enjoy it enough to be unwilling to give it up for the cradle or the sink; well for her to be able to look after herself but never to be so visibly able that it will inhibit the impulse of the right man to look after her; well for her to be ambitious, but never ambitious enough actually to put her personal objectives first. When a man marries, no one expects him to cease being a commuter and to become a farmer because it would be good for the children—though in fact it might. But when a woman marries, her occupation becomes an auxiliary activity.

Here we come back to the presence of a fundamental dualism which has made the so-called "emancipation" of women different from the emancipation of any other group in society. Other emancipated groups have sought to substitute a new condition in place of an old one and to obliterate the old, but except for a few of the most militant women in a generation of crusading suffragettes, now almost extinct, women have never renounced the roles of wife and mother. The result has been that their objective was to reconcile a new condition with an old one, to hold in balance the principle of equality, which denies a difference, and the practice of wifehood and motherhood which recognizes a difference in the roles of men and women. The eternal presence of this dualism has not only caused a distressing amount of confusion and tension among women themselves;[15] it has also caused confusion among their many volunteer critics. The result is that we encounter more widely inconsistent generalizations about modern American women than about almost any other subject.

For example, modern woman, we are told, is gloriously free from the inferiority of the past, but she is miserable and insecure in her new freedom. She wields the purse strings of the nation and has become dominant over a world of increasingly less-masculine men who no longer trust themselves to buy a suit of clothes without their wife's approval. But also she does the routine work at typewriter and sink while the men still run the universe.

Similarly, we are assured that the modern woman is an idle, parasitic, bridge-playing victim of technological unemployment in her own mechanized home, and also that she is the busy manager of a family and household and budget whose demands make the domestic chores the wretched, petty little world of soap opera and neighborhood gossip, but she excels in her knowledge of public affairs and she became an effective guardian of literary and artistic values when her money-grubbing husband defaulted on the responsibility. She is rearing the best crop of children ever produced on this planet, by the most improved methods ever devised, while her overprotectiveness has bred "momism" and her unwillingness to stay at home has bred delinquency.

VIII

Clearly, we are still a long way from having arrived an any monotonous unpagnimity of opinion about the character of American women. Yet if we will focus carefully upon what we really know with some degree of assurance, we can perhaps begin the process of striking a balance. We certainly know, for instance, that many of the trends of American history have been operative for both men and women in somewhat the same way. The emphasis upon the right of the individual has operated to remove legal disabilities upon women, to open many avenues to gainful employment, to confer the suffrage, and so on. Even our divorce rate is an ironic tribute to the fact that the interests of the individual, and perhaps in a majority of cases the individual woman, are placed ahead of the protection of a social institution—namely the family. The rejection of authority in American life, which has made our child-rearing permissive and has weakened the quality of leadership in our politics, has also meant that the relation of husband and wife is more of a partnership and less of an autocracy in this age and in this country than at any other time or place in Western civilization. The competitive strain in American life has impelled American women as well as American men to strive hard for their goals, and to assert themselves in the strife—indeed European critics complain that they assert themselves far more strenuously than European women and entirely too much for the tranquility of society.

On the other hand, we also know that the experience of women remains in many ways a distinctive experience. Biologically, there are still the age-old facts that women are not as big as men and not as strong; that the sex act involves consequences for them which it does not involve for the male; that the awareness of these consequences conditions the psychological attitudes of women very deeply; and that motherhood is a biological function while fatherhood is, in a sense, a cultural phenomenon.

Historically, there is the formidable truth that the transformations of modern life have impinged upon men and women in different ways. The avenues of employment opened to men are not the same as the avenues of employment opened to women. The revolution in our economy has deepened the division between work in the home and work outside the home by according the sanction of monetary reward to the one and denying it to the other—thus devaluing in a new way work which is distinctively women's. The economic revolution, while converting most men from producers to earners, has converted most women from processors to consumers, and the exploitation of the consumer has, again, added a new devaluation to women's role. Society has given her the opportunity to fulfill her personal ambitions through the same career-activities as a man, but it cannot make her career aspirations and her family aspirations fit together as they do for a man.

The result of all this is a certain tension between her old role and her new one. More of an individualist than women in traditional societies, she is by no means as whole-heartedly individualistic as the American male, and as a study at Berkeley recently showed, she still hesitates to claim individualism as a quality of her own.[10] If she enters the competitive race, she does so with an awareness that the top posts are still pretty much the monopoly of men, and with a certain limitation upon her competitive commitment. In short, she is constantly holding in balance her general opportunities as a person and her distinctive needs as a woman, and when we consider how badly these two go together in principle, can we not say that she is maintaining the operative equilibrium between them with a remarkable degree of skill and of success?

The answer to my childish riddle was that the big Indian is the little Indian's mother. To say that she is a squaw is not to deny that she is an Indian—but it is to say that she is an Indian for whom the expectations of the masculine world of Indians, or of Americans, do not apply. It is to say that her qualities and traits, whether she is an Indian, or an American, will reflect the influence of the same sweeping forces which influence the world of men, but that it will reflect them with a difference.

In this sense, what we say about the character of the American people should be said not in terms of half of the American population—even if it is the male half—but in terms of the character of the totality of the people. In this sense, also, attention to the historic character of American women is important not only as a specialty for female scholars or for men who happen to take an interest in feminism, but as a coordinate major part of the over-all, comprehensive study of the American character as a whole. For the character of any nation is the composite of the character of its men and of its women and though these may be deeply similar in many ways, they are almost never entirely the same.

POTTER'S FOOTNOTES

(NOTE: For **boldface** footnotes, see next chapter, "Answers to Potter.")

1 Frederick Jackson Turner, THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN HISTORY (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1920), p. 4.

2 Robert Lynd, "The People as Consumers," writes that there is "probably today a greater variation from house to house in the actual inventory list of family possessions . . . than at any previous era in man's history." RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS IN THE UNITED STATES (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1933), pp. 857-911.

3 In 1957, of the 21,000,000 women in the work force, 11,000,000 were wives. Female employment was highest (45 per cent) in the age brackets 20 to 24, declined to 39 per cent in bracket 25 to 44, rose to 40 per cent in the bracket 45 to 64, and declined to 10 per cent in the bracket 65 and over.

4 HARPER'S MAGAZINE, Vol. 223 (Nov., 1961), p. 23.

5 David Riesman, "The Lonely Crowd: A Reconsideration in 1960" in Seymour Martin Lipset and Leo Lowenthal, eds., CULTURE AND SOCIAL CHARACTER: THE WORK OF DAVID RIESMAN REVIEWED (New York; The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), p. 428, discusses an investigation by Michael S. Olmstead which showed that Smith College girls as more other-directed than their group, but Riesman does not state what his own belief is in this matter.

6 Probably the best of the literature which emphasizes the sex frustration of the modern American woman is found in professional publications in the fields of psychology and psychoanalysis which do not reach a popular audience. In the literature for the layman, probably the best presentation of this point of view is Simone de Beauvoir's excellent THE SECOND SEX (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1953), but other items have enjoyed a circulation which they hardly deserve. Two cases in point are Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, MODERN WOMAN: THE LOST SEX (New York: Harper, 1947) and Eric John Dingwall, THE AMERICAN WOMAN: AN HISTORICAL STUDY (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1958). Denis W. Brogan's judicious and yet precise evaluation that Dingwall's book is "strictly for the birds" would be equally applicable to Lundberg. For an able argument that the condition of modern woman must be understood partly in social terms, and that the concept of "genital trauma" has been overdone, see Mirra Komarovsky, WOMEN IN THE MODERN WORLD: THEIR EDUCATION AND THEIR DILEMMAS (Boston: Little, Brown and Company), pp. 31-52.

7 Kamarovsky, WOMEN IN THE MODERN WORLD, pp. 127-153.

8 Experiments on the rate of eye-blink, as conducted by James M. Vicary, a leading exponent of motivation research, were reported in Vance Packard, THE HIDDEN PERSUADERS (New York: David McKay Co., 1957), pp. 106-108.

9 Sylvia Wright, "Whose World? and Welcome to It," in HARPER's MAGAZINE, vol. 210 (May, 1955), pp. 35-38.

10 John P. McKee and A.C. Sheriffs, "Men's and Women's Beliefs, Ideals, and Self-Concepts," in AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, LXIV (1959), pp. 356-363.

IN ANSWERING QUESTION NO. 12, OF ASA QUESTIONNAIRE ON WOMEN, 1971:

"Potter is probably right. I don't have bibliographies or lists with me but they are probably male-oriented. I don't think we have paid attention, really." (664)

"I've advocated Potter's position for some time. I've also advocated Harriet Martineau's research in classes and have always specifically discussed the "female" problem esp. in course on 'Myth and Oral Literature.' " (707)

"I always thought that the impact of the frontier on women's rights *and* their implementation as well as the contribution of women both on the frontier and in societies in 'the East' which were concerned with the frontier were related to the 'proving' of the Turner thesis" (548)

"I've always agreed with and used Potter's argument. But don't overdo it. Some of our most important generalizations, some that I deal with in religious history, are probably more feminine than masculine, e.g., those having to do with social outreach, volunteer associations, etc." (638)

—Chmaj, AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, Vol. One, pp. 66 and 67.

CHAPTER TWO

Even Good Guys Make Mistakes:

Answers to Potter's "American Woman and the American Character"

Let me begin this section with a confession. When David Potter's essay first came across my desk, as a pamphlet sent by the sponsors of the Stetson University American Studies lectures, I remember that I did not read it. That is, I recall being interested enough to extract the central thesis from it and set it aside for later reading, but "later" did not arrive, as it turned out, for some time. Today I wonder how I could have missed so dramatic a challenge to the interpretation not only of American character but American history, stereotypes, values and ideas in general. There are times when I wonder whether I scanned the essay at all, as when its opening fable caught me unawares two years ago despite the fact that I'd heard the same riddle long before in another form. (A surgeon at an emergency clinic declares, just before the operation is to begin, "My God, it's my son!" Yet the patient's father was just killed in the same auto accident: how can this be?)

By the time the Commission on the Status of Women composed the questionnaire sent to the ASA membership in 1971, I had, of course, become reacquainted with Potter's pioneer effort, and I chose to cast one of the questions on the questionnaire in terms of his central thesis (for the interesting range of responses to this question, see Volume One of AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES, pp. 65-68). It seemed at the time a small way of acknowledging one more contribution to American Studies scholarship the recently-deceased historian had made.

The force of this contribution, and Potter's prescience in anticipating issues only now at the center of controversies in women's studies courses, is still—to my mind—the central fact to emphasize. Well before American women themselves rose in mass protest against being "wiped out" by law and custom and history books, and by the aggregate of ideas in the culture that have allowed the "wipe-out" phenomenon to occur; before Betty Friedan became famous for labelling the postwar version of this cluster of ideas "The Feminine Mystique"; before the women's movement had moved past anti-male protest to speculate more positively on how feminine and feminist interpretations of American culture might affect various areas of scholarship, David Potter had already explored the territory and asked the questions (he did not always have the right answers). In particular, he asked the central question: was the interpretation of American character (a subject about which he himself had written in PEOPLE OF PLENTY) essentially so male-oriented as to be potentially false? Although it took some years before the importance of his challenge would be recognized, today Potter's essay appears again and again on bibliographies for courses in women's studies, American Studies, and American history.

During the past year, however, I have become sensitive not only to the central thesis of Potter's essay and its essential validity but also to its points of vulnerability, its weaknesses, as have others (so I have heard). Certain students of mine had taken exception to my enthusiasm over Potter's achievement, and when one of them asked seriously one year whether I had assigned the essay because I really supported the thesis or to illustrate through one "horrible example" how subtle male paternalism in scholarship can be, I was sure the time had come to distinguish between acknowledging a genuine achievement and criticizing phases of the argument that, indeed, will not stand up against the force of certain facts and analysis that may be summoned to refute them. It is the purpose of this "counter-essay" to present a sampling of such analyses by quoting, as much as possible, directly from those responsible for putting forward arguments that refute, support, or illustrate the issues raised.

In Potter's essay itself, the reader will find footnotes inserted near phrases, sentences, or sections I wish to comment upon (or, rather, summon others to comment upon). As will be seen, in some of these cases, I wish to challenge the argument, in others to provide support through new research, and in still others to use Potter's ideas as launching points for dialogues. Finally, let me clarify at the outset that although I have deliberately selected the voices of various eras to address themselves to these footnotes, it should not therefore be inferred that any of them wrote for the purpose of answering Potter, or that the writer either accepts or rejects his thesis. (Indeed, in all but a few cases, it is probably a safe guess that the writer quoted had not then read Potter's essay.) — B. C.

"THE MACHINE IN WHOSE GARDEN?": FRONTIER VS. CITY FOR AMERICAN WOMEN

In Part I of his essay, Potter examines a few of the assumptions behind Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis to illustrate the distortions which arise when social generalizations about a whole society are made without taking women's experiences into consideration.

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
1 "On the frontier, women were especially dependent upon having a man . . . ."	On the frontier, women had to fend for themselves (see Lerner, below); women were especially *in*dependent in the West, as compared to the East (see Smith, below).
2 "The frontier was brutally harsh for females . . ."	Agreed. (See Lerner, Smith, Duniway below).

GERDA LERNER ON PIONEER HEROINES

". . . Because of scouting and hunting expeditions and frequent family moves, the men of the family were sometimes absent for long periods of time, during which the women had to fend for themselves and their households. This meant not only coping with the usual hardships of wilderness farming, but often defending crops, farm, and lives against attacking Indians. There are many instances of great heroism by women in such situations." Gerda Lerner, THE WOMAN IN AMERICAN HISTORY (Menlo Park, Ca.: Addison-Wesley, 1971), p. 23.

PAGE SMITH REPORTS: GO WEST, YOUNG WOMAN, GO WEST!

"The pioneer woman is such a classic figure that it is easy to lose the sight of the reality behind the stereotype. On the American frontier women preserved the status that they had enjoyed in colonial New England. Strictly speaking, the urban male did not need a wife; he could get along with a housekeeper and a mistress. But the frontier farmer was as dependent on his mate as she on him...

"It is, to be sure, an incredible story. When Eastern ladies were fainting at a coarse word or vulgar sight their Western sisters fought off Indians, ran cattle, made homes and raised children in the wilderness. It was in the West, in consequence, that women had the greatest status. Appropriately enough, Wyoming Territory granted women the vote in 1869 and Colorado followed suit twenty-four years later. But that is only a small part of the story. In countless Western communities women participated actively in the social and political life of their towns." Page Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1970), pp. 222-24.

ABIGAIL SCOTT DUNIWAY: "I WAS A PIONEER DRUDGE!"

"I, if not washing, scrubbing, churning or nursing the baby, was preparing their [her family and male boarders] meals in our lean-to kitchen. To bear two children in two and a half years from my marriage day, to make thousands of pounds of butter every year for market, not including what was used in our free hotel at home; to sew and cook, and wash and iron; to bake and clean and stew and fry; to be, in short, a general pioneer drudge, with never a penny of my own, was not pleasant business for an erstwhile school teacher." Pioneer feminist Abigail Scott Duniway as quoted in Gerda Lerner, THE WOMAN IN AMERICAN HISTORY (Menlo Park, Ca.: Addison-Wesley, 1971), p. 57.

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
3 "For American women, opportunity began pretty much where the frontier left off."	Opportunity **ended** pretty much where the frontier left off, when the machine came into the garden (see Smith, above; Papashvily, below).
4 "But in the growing cities, opportunities for female employment began to proliferate . . ." and with "access to earning power," "the historic basis for her traditional subordination had been swept away" so she stood a better chance to fulfill "the American promise of opportunity and independence."	Not true. She had more opportunity and independence before the rise of the city and industrialism. She was **less** subordinate, more independent, as pioneer woman (see Smith, above) and as 18th-century pre-industrial woman (see Papashvily, below), before her opportunities were curtailed.
5 "The city was the frontier for American women and the business office was what gave them . . . independence . . . to follow a course of their own."	Not true (see all sources named above), but it is a myth that still prevails, e.g., for the modern suburban woman, newly liberated, coming to the city as the way to be on her own (see Skolnik, below).

HELEN PAPASHVILY ON WOMEN IN THE SHADOW OF THE MACHINE

". . . The letters, diaries and newspapers of the eighteenth century show women busy in a variety of careers. They kept taverns and shops and managed farms; they manufactured, processed and traded; they spun and wove; they made lace, dyed silk and bleached linen; they were printers, editors, teachers, doctors, nurses, druggists and writers. They won respect and admiration from their masculine contemporaries and, better than either, the right to conduct their own affairs. In three states, no law indicating the contrary, women even voted.

"Then came the inevitable machine and with it, as always, centralized production. When the shop, the office, the factory moved out of the home women lost their chance for vocational and professional training and business experience. The traders came to require more specialized techniques, the professions greater academic knowledge, than women could acquire at home. As new laws were passed and older ones more strictly enforced, women found their opportunities further curtailed.

"In settlement after settlement as the frontier moved west and south the same thing happened and sometimes very quickly. For economic history, repeating itself, gained momentum in the process and a decade in the New World often accomplished the social changes of a century in the Old." Helen Waite Papashvily, ALL THE HAPPY ENDINGS (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), pp. 19-20.

JENNIFER SKOLNIK: " 'OH, HELL, I'M GOING TO NEW YORK' "

"There is a particular woman who has decided to take on the city alone (but for the four small children clutching her thighs). She is fresh from the suburbs and a worn-out marriage. She is 31 and has her share of guilts, ambitions, memories, regrets, confusions, and experience teaching elementary school. She is very intent on the big issues—like whether or not you are allowed to boss your own life—and she is determined to find out about that one. For her New York represents headquarters, the giant risk, the place where you really have to perform. There was a time, many years back, when she dreamed of coming here, but she was sidetracked then by a boy out of Harvard whom she loved, by **his** dreams, and by his babies. Now, so much later, New York suddenly seems possible again.

"The woman I just described is me, of course, but I could tell you about my friend who began a very normal existence at the Masked Ball in St. Louis. **She** departed her husband and many children this winter in favor of hitchhiking around the country with a counterculture hammock salesman.

"We are not unusual any more, we wives and mothers of long standing who are reshaping our lives.

"By the time I looked up from a car pool in Baltimore to announce defiantly, 'Oh hell, I'm going to New York,' it was a tossup which of our band of questioning housewives would be the first to leave. The move abroad in the land to change women's expectations for themselves had reached us too. We wanted to be taken seriously. We thought that so far we had been pretty seriously taken." Jennifer Skolnik, "Notes of a Recycled Housewife," NEW YORK, 5 (May 22, 1972), p. 36.

THE AMERICAN WOMAN AS SELF-DIRECTED HOUSEWIFE: THE MYTH OF THE DRUDGERY-FREE MAJORITY

In Part II of his essay, Potter took up interpretations of American character, such as that offered in Whyte's ORGANIZATION MAN, that portray an America becoming more conformist, less self-directed.

Potter's Argument	**Responses to Potter's Argument**
6 "None of this applies in any sense to women, except for women who are employees" but "two out of three are not employees."	The image has changed, the facts have changed, and our analysis must reflect the new image (see Griffiths, below; and "The Chart Story," next chapter).

MARTHA GRIFFITHS ON THE NEW IMAGE OF AMERICAN WOMEN

"Traditionally our society has viewed men as providers and women as homemakers; men as protectors and women as those in need of protection; men as leaders and women as followers. The law has reflected this view of women but the image no longer fits the facts.

"Dramatic changes in American life style have created new roles and a new image for women. Today women are considerably more likely to finish high school and attend college than they once were. From 1960 to 1970, the percentage of white women, to 29 years old, who completed high school or some college rose from 66 percent to 80 percent; among black women, the corresponding percentage climbed from 43 percent to 63 percent. And during the same decade the number of women with some college education increased 160 percent, as compared to 100 percent for men.

"Today young women are not only better educated, but also more likely to live independently than they once were. From 1960 to 1970, the proportion of adult women living alone or with unrelated roommates jumped 50 percent—to 7.6 million, or about 10 percent of all adult women. The number of women 20 to 34 years old in this category rose at the fastest rate, more than doubling. By 1970 more than 10 percent of American families were headed by women and during the same decade the proportion of women 20 to 24 years old who were single climbed from 28 percent to 36 percent. Correspondingly, during the 1960's the number of children born to women younger than 25 declined.

"Today women are also more likely to work outside the home than they once were. From 1960 to 1970 the percentage of adult women in the labor force jumped from 37 percent to more than 43 percent. By 1970 women comprised 38 percent of the professional and technical labor force, as compared to 28 percent in 1950.

"In short, today the American woman is considerably more likely to finish high school, attend college, live alone, marry late, bear few children, and work outside the home than she was in 1960. This is the new image of women." Martha W. Griffiths, "The Law Must Reflect the New Image of Women," From article reprint, THE HASTINGS LAW JOURNAL, 23 (Nov. 1971), pp. 1-2.

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
7 "It seems fairly evident that the housewife, with the wide range of	It may *seem* fairly evident, but the facts are, it didn't turn out that way at

consumer goods available for purchase and the wide variety of mechanical devices to free her from drudgery has a far broader set of alternatives . . ." and we could conclude, "there is a far greater measure of independent and self-directed work than there was in the past."

all. The woman has been the consumer, all right, but technology has not really freed her from drudgery (see Friedan, below), and being a consumer is itself hard work, especially since she does *not* control the final decision and so is *not* more but *less* self-directed (see Willis, below).

BETTY FRIEDAN: "HOUSEWIFERY EXPANDS TO FILL THE TIME AVAILABLE"

". . . Each scientific advance that might have freed women from the drudgery of cooking, cleaning, and washing, thereby giving her more time for other purposes, instead imposed new drudgery, until housework not only expanded to fill the time available, but could hardly be done in the available time.

"...According to a Bryn Mawr survey made just after the war, in a typical United States farm family, housework took 60.55 hours a week; 78.35 hours in cities under 100,000; 80.57 in cities of over 100,000. With all their appliances, the suburban and city housewives spend more time on housework than the busy farmer's wife. That farmer's wife, of course, has quite a lot of other work to do." Betty Friedan, "Housewifery Expands to Fill the Time Available," THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963), pp. 240-41.

ELLEN WILLIS ON THE NATION'S PURSE STRINGS AND WHO CONTROLS THEM

"For women, buying and wearing clothes and beauty aids is not so much consumption as work. One of a woman's jobs in this society is to be an attractive sexual object, and clothes and make-up are tools of the trade. The chief consumer in this instance is really the man, who consumes woman - as - sexual - commodity. Similarly, buying food and household furnishings is a domestic task; it is the wife's chore to pick out the commodities that will be consumed by the whole family. And appliances and cleaning materials are tools that facilitate her domestic function. When a woman spends a lot of money and time decorating her home or herself, or hunting down the latest in vacuum cleaners, it is not ideal self-indulgence (let alone the result of psychic manipulation) but a healthy attempt to find outlets for her creative energies within her circumscribed role.

"There is a persistent myth that a wife has control over her husband's money because she gets to spend it. Actually, she does not have much more financial autonomy than the employee of a corporation who is delegated to buy office furniture or supplies. The husband, especially if he is rich, may allow his wife wide latitude in spending—he may reason that since she has to work in the home she is entitled to furnish it to her taste, or he may simply not want to bother with domestic details—but he retains the ultimate veto power. If he doesn't like the way his wife handles his money, she will hear about it. In most households, particularly in the working class, a wife cannot make significant expenditures, either personal or in her role as object-servant, without consulting her husband. And more often than not, according to statistics, it is the husband who makes the final decisions about furniture and appliances as well as other major expenditures like houses, car, and vacations." Ellen Willis, " 'Consumerism' and Women," NOTES FROM THE SECOND YEAR: WOMEN'S LIBERATION, 1970, pp. 74-75.

"USE ALL YOUR TALENTS: BECOME A HOUSEWIFE!": HOW THE VERSATILITY MYTH ARRIVED AT THE WRONG TIME

Part III of Potter's essay takes up the generalization that Americans have become more specialized, less versatile, which Potter says is based on evidence about the occupations of males. Evidence on women, he says, would show the contrary.

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
8 The American housewife's role today "requires that she be far more versatile than her grandmother was"—she must be a dietitian, economist, child psychologist, and manager. "In addition to all this, society now enjoins her not to rely upon the marriage vows to hold her husband, but to keep her personality and her appearance so attractive that he will have no incentive to stray. Whatever else she may be, she is certainly not a specialist."	While no less an authority than the president of a women's college has been among those who have promulgated the idea that women use all their education and talents as wives and mothers (see Eddy, below), others find the argument about the "versatility" of the housewife in using her education totally spurious—an invented mystique (see Friedan, below). The irony is that just when technology *might* have freed the woman to participate in society, she returned to the home (see Friedan, Rossi below). There is a kind of terror hidden beneath the innocence of Potter's sentence about the woman expected to hold her man, but to recognize it, one must learn to consider the text from the woman's point of view.

EDWARD EDDY, JR., TELLS CHATHAM WOMEN WHY DIPLOMAS MAKE GOOD DIAPERS

"We do a great disservice to American women by dismissing their role as wives and mothers as unfortunate dissipations of time and talent. The educated woman who becomes a wife and mother has an enormously important job to do. If done well, it cannot help but engage every aspect of her education. If we regard the housewife and mother as simple fools, we only penalize and even jeopardize our own future. It is the mother, almost singlehandedly, who will raise a generation of potential peace-makers. . . .

"The educated woman, viewing life in perspective, is free to seek an answer to the old question: What, after all, is MAN? The educated woman can keep the male eye from trivia, and the male mind from preoccupation with immediate effects. The educated woman can encourage a man to rise above self, can make community service something more than a hollow status race, can insist on an intelligent approach to foreign aid, desegregation, taxes, and federal aid to the schools and colleges that educate her children." Edward D. Eddy, Jr., "What's the Use of Educating Women?" SATURDAY REVIEW (May 18, 1963), p. 67.

BETTY FRIEDAN ON THE WOMAN'S-WORK-IS-NEVER-DONE MYSTIQUE

"Toying with the question, how can one hour of housework expand to fill six hours (same house, same work, same wife), I came back again to the basic paradox of the feminine mystique: That it emerged to glorify woman's role as housewife at the very moment when the barriers to her full participation in society were lowered, at the very moment when science and education and her own ingenuity made it possible for a woman to be both wife and mother and to take an active part in the world outside the home. The glorification of "woman's role," then, seems to be in proportion to society's reluctance to treat women as complete human beings; for the less real function that role has, the more it is decorated with meaningless details to conceal its emptiness." Betty Friedan, "Housewifery Expands to Fill the Time Available," THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963), pp. 238-39.

ALICE ROSSI ON THE MOTHERHOOD

"It is a paradox of our social history that motherhood has become a full-time occupation in precisely the era when objectively it could, and perhaps should, be a part-time occupation for a short phase of a woman's life span. I suspect that the things women do for and with their children have been needlessly elaborated to make motherhood a full-time job . . . .

". . . Psychiatric counselors of college students frequently have as their chief task that of helping their young patients to free themselves from the entangling web of dependence upon their parents, primarily their mothers, and encouraging them to form stable independent lives of their own....But if the next patient is twenty-five years old with young children at home, the analyst tells her the children would suffer emotional damage if she left them on a regular basis to hold down a job. The very things which would reduce the excessive dependency of children before it becomes a critical problem are discouraged by the counselor or analyst during the years when the dependency is being formed. If it is true that the adult is what the child was, and if we wish adults to be assertive, independent, responsible people, then they should be reared in a way which prevents excessive dependence on a parent. . . . The best way to encourage such independence and responsibility in the child is for the mother to be a living model of these qualities herself. If she had an independent life of her own, she would find her stage of life interesting, and therefore be less likely to live for and through her children. By maintaining such an independent life, the American mother might finally provide her children with something she can seldom give when she is home—a healthy dose of inattention, and a chance for adolescence to be a period of fruitful immaturity and growth." Alice S. Rossi, "Equality Between the Sexes: An Immodest Proposal," in THE AMERICAN WOMAN, ed. Robert Jay Lifton (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1965), pp. 113-14.

VERSATILITY (read TRAUMA) vs. INTEGRATION (read BOREDOM): WHICH MYTH IS THE REAL MYTH AND WHICH IS THE REAL NUEROSIS?

The next four footnotes, 9-12 below, raise problems related to a central contradiction in the myths about the American woman as wife and mother—a contradiction both in the image that is presented and the criticism of that image. Earlier I spoke of the terror for women behind Potter's innocent suggestion that they can no longer depend on marriage vows to hold their husbands, that they must now keep themselves sexually alluring and "sensuous" throughout their marriages or risk losing their men. Insofar as the "versatility myth" confirms the findings, discussed elsewhere, demonstrating that modern women are traumatized by the culture's expectation that they learn to be schizoid—fulfilling roles both as "good" housewives and "bad" temptresses, Fair Maidens and Dark Ladies, white-gloved Young American Girls and "inter-spaced" Great American Moms—this versatility myth runs counter to the myth of the "integrated personality." For the first presents a creature of "infinite variety" (as in Morton Hunt) whose neurosis comes from having *too much* to do and be, while the second offers a wholesome wife whose boredom comes (as in Betty Friedan) from not having *enough* to do and be. (See *Figure 1* below for Helen Lopata's OCCUPATION: HOUSEWIFE. Free of the tensions that tear the "versatile" woman apart, the "integrated" housewife here stands in repose, anonymous, possibly bored, staring into the distance waiting for something to happen, her life entirely predictable.)

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
9 Potter concludes Part III: "If we based our social generalizations upon women rather than upon men, we might quite justifiably affirm that the modern age is an age of diversified activity rather than an age of specialization."	Potter's conclusion might better read: "If we based our social generalizations upon women rather than upon men, we might affirm that the modern age is an age of psychological madness, in which one part of the personality is encouraged to compete against another." Pulled in opposite directions by her "diverse" identities, the American woman must struggle against odds to remain a whole person, as when she is advised, "A good wife knows how to be an expensive mistress" (see AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I, p. 136, for ad).
10 In Part IV, on the differences between men's and women's work, Potter says the woman "does not have the alternation of work and leisure . . . of her husband. . . . And as long as a woman does keep house . . . she never experiences the traumatic, sudden transition from daily work as the focus of life to enforced idleness."	Apart from the partial contradiction here of the argument made earlier that women's lives are more versatile, less conformist, there is evidence even in Lopata that women *do* experience traumatic periods of change—not once but several times as their "shrinking social circle" progressively isolates them (see Lopata, below).

HELEN LOPATA ON THE "SHRINKING SOCIAL CIRCLE" OF WOMEN

"One of the problems of women in both city and suburb is the automatic drop in status which accompanies the unpreventable 'shrinking of the social circle' stage in the role of housewife. . . . Most of the female population in American society is treated as rather valueless once it has produced at least one child and reared it to pre-adulthood. Thus, most women are left in a situation similar to that of retired men, for thirty or more years of their lives . . . . 'I'm just a housewife' is a transitional self-concept . . . . Middle-aged women are one of the segments of the population neglected by social scientists. . . .

"The second phase of the 'shrinking circle' stage ocurs with widowhood. . . Widowhood results in very dramatic changes in social roles and relations. A number of factors, including, of course, the manner in which she accomplishes what Eric Lindemann calls 'grief work,' complicates the effect it will have upon a particular person. Role shifts are connected with the form and degree of dependence she had on her husband and on his role involvements, as well as on the kinds of relations available in widowhood. Contacts with former friends become strained for a variety of social and psychological reasons. Financial, housing, recreational, sexual, and sentimental problems result in redefinitions and in attempts at solutions which meet with varying levels of success." Helen Znaniecki Lopata, OCCUPATION: HOUSEWIFE (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 41-42.

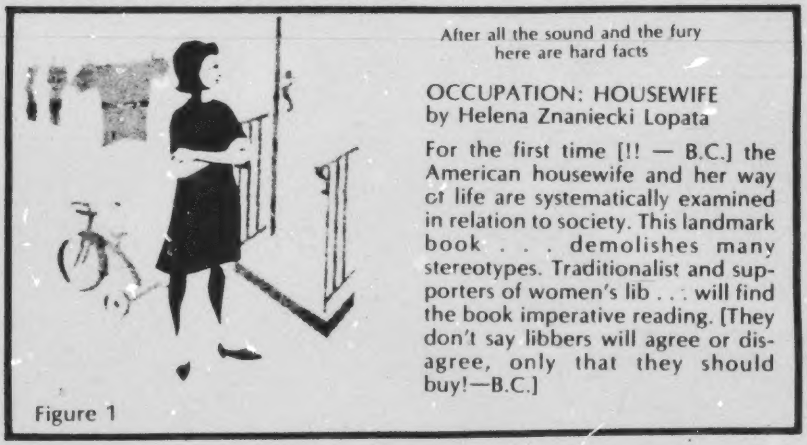
Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
11 In closing his review of Reisman's thesis and why it does not apply to women, who allegedly have been historically dependent and conformist, Potter says, "it would mean women have been other-directed all along . . . [but] more than half of the American people are becoming less other-directed rather than more so. With the gradual disappearance of the so-called 'clinging vine' type, who dared not call her soul her own, this is, in fact, apparently just what is happening."	By now, Potter has compounded one kind of error in fact (that women in America *were* more dependent than independent in the past) with another (that they are becoming more independent), both of which have been refuted above. The evidence that women have become *less* able to call their souls their own is everywhere around by now: e.g., see AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I, "Fact Sheet: 'You've Come a Long Way, Baby'??" pp. 29-30, and "The Chart Story" (Part III, Chapter 3) in this volume. Far from disappearing, the "clinging vine" returned after the war to displace her more inner-directed, independent predecessors of the 1930s and '40s. We might better speak of the "gradual reemergence of the clinging type."
12 ". . . Women have not found all these changes quite as emancipating as they were expected to be. Indeed, much of the serious literature about American women is pessimistic . . ., the dissatisfactions and the sexual frustration of modern American women its principle theme." ". . . The American housewife tends to disparage herself as well as her work, as both being unworthy . . . ."	The opening sentence must be by now the understatement of the decade! The question of the housewife's low image of herself is the theme that Helen Lopata takes up in OCCUPATION: HOUSEWIFE. Lopata confirms that the low image of self exists, but challenges whether it *should.* Coming here from Poland about the time Friedan was first making an impact on American thought, Lopata often seems to be answering Friedan—at least so her publishers,

more than Lopata, would have us believe (see below). Her own division of housewives into three types is far less clearly a contradiction of Friedan's findings.

ON LOPATA, FROM THE BACK COVER OF THE PAPERBACK EDITION

Everyone is ready with an opinion about the American housewife, but . . . [this] work is based upon a broad sociological study of almost a thousand women in the metropolitan Chicago area, whom Mrs. Lopata interviewed in depth during a five year period in the 1960's. [To be exact, the late '50s and then in 1964 and '65—thus her book could hardly be refutation to Friedan, whose book came out in '63.-BC] **Perhaps the most basic of her findings** is that modern women, contrary to popular stereotypes, are becoming increasingly creative and competent as housewives and as participants in American society. [Emphasis added.]

ON LOPATA, FROM THE PUBLISHER'S AD IN POPULAR MAGAZINES



After all the sound and the fury
here are hard facts

OCCUPATION: HOUSEWIFE
by Helena Znaniecki Lopata

For the first time [!! — B.C.] the American housewife and her way of life are systematically examined in relation to society. This landmark book . . . demolishes many stereotypes. Traditionalist and supporters of women's lib . . . will find the book imperative reading. [They don't say libbers will agree or disagree, only that they should buy!—B.C.]

Figure 1

HELEN LOPATA'S OWN CONCLUSIONS, FROM HER FINAL CHAPTER—3 TYPES

"American metropolitan housewives do not form a homogeneous group. . . . only three general types will be discussed [here] . . .

"**The restricted housewife,** who is usually relatively uneducated and lower class, limits herself to passive stances, task-orientation, home-bound interests, and minimally creative performances in the roles of housewife, wife, and mother. She often experiences a feeling of inadequacy in a world in which she thinks 'other women' have more influence...

"The restricted housewife remains resentful of the male. . . .

"The housewife with a bit more education and some skills for interacting with others is happier about her community, although still feeling powerless in relation to the society. . . . Basically, this kind of a woman is typical of the city middle-class which is still 'uncrystallized' in its life patterns . . . . The lack of crystallization of **the recently middle-class woman** is evident not at only one period of time, but in the whole life cycle...

". . . the third type of housewife expresses attitudes which may represent a new personality trend, possibly the final consequence of some of the other changes. . . . **The modern housewife** is likely to define homemaking as extending into the community, mothering as utilizing all societal facilities to expand the world of the young, and wifehood as many-leveled involvement in the various social roles of the husband. . . .

"[Thus] . . . THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE, which holds that 'a woman's place is in the home,' and Betty Friedan's restriction of the home to an uncreative and limited function, **both seem to be operative....**" Lopata, OCCUPATION: HOUSEWIFE (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 369-76. Emphasis mine—BC. The point here is that of the three types of housewives presented—the restricted housewife, the recently middle-class woman, and the "modern housewife", only the third challenges the Friedan stereotype.

WHO RULES IN THE CONSUMER SOCIETY? THE AMERICAN CINDERELLA MYTH— WYLIE VS. MODERN TELEVISION

While the central thesis of Potter's essay is that women have been ignored in the major interpretations of American character and culture, and while Potter on several occasions has speculated on generalizations that might have obtained if conclusions about the national character had been based on women rather than men, one of the generalizations that *has* been made about American culture as dominated by American women is almost ignored by Potter. This is the assumption that the woman is America's consumer, the Materialist of the materialistic consumer society, the American Cinderella of Philip Wylie's GENERATION OF VIPERS. Potter wisely rejects the idea that her right to spend the nation's wealth has enhanced the image of American woman, and argues that she has been demeaned by becoming the consumer—an argument supported by recent studies of television commercials. Footnotes 13 and 14 below contrast recent findings on commercials to Wylie's argument.

Potter's Argument:

13 "Literature stresses the contention of Sigmund Freud that women instinctively envy the maleness of a man and reject their own sex. . . . But a very respectable argument can be made and has been made that what women envy about men is not their maleness . . . but their dominance in the society . . . ."

"Insofar as the consumer is an object of condescension . . . it means that women become the objects of

Responses to Potter's Argument:

On these two issues, Potter's foresight was remarkably in advance of present-day authors; it seems to me but one response is appropriate: RIGHT ON! His recognition of Freud's mistake about penis envy and his awareness of the contempt rather than presumed power of the Woman-as-Consumer image in **the** Consumer Society were remarkable insights indeed. They confirm the findings of Friedan, Weisstein, and others (in the first case) and of others like Ellen Willis (quoted under footnote number 7 in this section). The Hennessee-more than their share of the low esteem in which the consumer is held. . . the role of the consumer has not enhanced the dignity of women.” Nicholson report on television commercials, excerpted below, shows how pervasive the attack on the woman consumer really is.

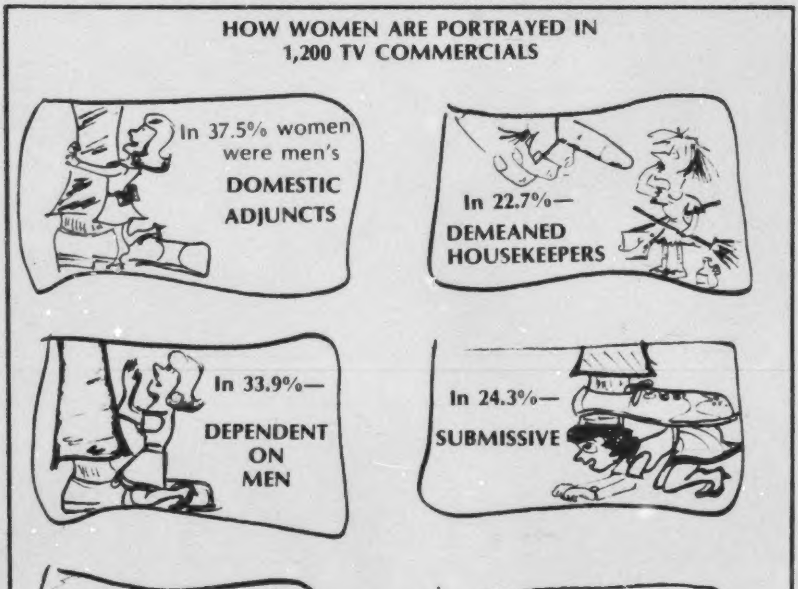

HOW WOMEN ARE PORTRAYED IN 1,200 TV COMMERCIALS
In 37.5% women were men's DOMESTIC ADJUNCTS
In 22.7%— DEMEANED HOUSEKEEPERS
In 33.9%— DEPENDENT ON MEN
In 24.3%— SUBMISSIVE
In 16.7%— SEX OBJECTS
In 17.1%— UNINTELLIGENT
In 42.6%— HOUSEHOLD FUNCTIONARIES

Figure 2. HOW WOMEN ARE PORTRAYED IN 1,200 TV COMMERCIALS, reproduced by Georgia Green from drawings by James Flora to illustrate article by Hennessee and Nicholson in *New York Times Magazine.*

"ALL THE VOICE-OVERS ARE MALE": STEREOTYPES IN TV COMMERCIALS

"In most ads women's lives are dreary. It's the men, children and even the family dog who have the fun while women do the work. In 54.4 per cent of the food commercials and 81.2 per cent of the cleaning commercials men are the beneficiaries. Maxim Freeze Dried Coffee shows a woman in a galley making coffee while her husband and son (not daughter—a daughter would be helping) are on deck, enjoying themselves sailing. Fleischman's Margarine uses the same theme. This time, the husband and son are out playing ball while Mom is in the kitchen worrying about their eating habits. She doesn't get a vacation, either. She unpacks in the hotel room while her husband complains about how he can't sleep—and she stops unpacking to get him some Nytol. There's something inherently illogical in all this. A woman's main goal is supposed to be to catch a man, but once she's got him she spends her life slaving away in the kitchen. Maybe she ought to rethink her goals?

……

". . . Male authority is a built-in assumption [in TV commercials], and it teaches women to look up to men as experts; 89.3 per cent of the voice-overs are male. . . . Women NEVER tell men what to do, but men are forever telling women what to do. And how to do it. Even in their own private beauty realm, women aren't quite with it. 'I'm all thumbs,' the helpless woman in the Revlon Fabuliner ad says. 'It won't skip? It won't run?' The male voice-over keeps telling her, with decreasing patience, that no matter how clumsy and inept she is, she just can't mess herself up because 'it draws a perfect line every time.' She finally learns the lesson and repeats, with slow, dawning comprehension: 'It draws a perfect line every time.' " Judith Adler Hennessee and Joan Nicholson, "NOW Says: TV Commercials Insult Women," THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE (May 28, 1972), pp. 13 and 48.

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
14 "Sylvia Wright . . . dealt ironically with the assertion, which we sometimes hear, that America has become a woman's world. " 'Whatever it is,' she wrote, 'I'll thank you to stop saying it's mine.' "	No one has been more vituperous in that assertion than Philip Wylie, and it seems time to hear from him, not only for his argument that the woman has become the American Cinderella, but also to hear a voice that does argue what Potter was wise enough *not* to.

PHILIP WYLIE: "WHAT'S GOOD FOR WOMEN IS GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY?"

". . . We have enshrined, not the earnest search of the Prince, which is a positive force in the story, but the girl's reward. And we have turned over most of our fixed wealth to our women. Woman spends it. The absurd posturings of chivalry (and they were superficial, for the most part, in the age of chivalry itself) serve to bloat the nonsensical notion of honoring and rewarding women for nothing more than being female. Cash is heaped at the feet of the sweetheart, the bride, the wife, and especially 'mom.' Since money does represent a crystallization of human energy, this gave females an inordinate power....The women, demanding to be made Cinderellas, have seized the cash allotment and various agencies have helped them do it for various reasons.

". . . Science and industry, slavishly following the commands of her liquid assets, have turned the cities into exactly what one would therefore expect: (a) markets for home-consumed goods; (b) markets for the sale of goods to make home-keeping a minimal-cinch; (c) markets offering female vanity-goods; and (d) minimal cinch homes.

"A city is that. The proudest part of its proudest street is its row of hat, dress and department stores. Its best residential area, in the newer cities, consists of penthouses and classy apartments, where living for female adults has been reduced to its easiest form and, just incidentally, living for children is almost impossible. Around this area are miscellaneously scattered the factories which produce the things the women consume, and the abodes of the citizens not fortunate enough to live on, say Park Avenue. This is a lazy female pattern. General Electric, General Motors, General Foods, Alcoa, and the United States government consult the female-demand pattern sedulously, and conform to it rather than to any other. The corporations turn the pumpkin into a Chevrolet. The government builds roads for it to palaces—movie palaces." Philip Wylie, GENERATION OF VIPERS (New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1942), pp. 46-7.

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
15 "The result has been that their objective was to reconcile a new condition with an old one, to hold in place the principle of equality, which denies difference, and the practice of wifehood and motherhood which recognizes a difference in the roles of men and women. **The eternal presence of this dualism** [emphasis added] has... caused a distressing amount of confusion and tension among women themselves."	In THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK, W.E.B. Dubois said of his race that one ever feels one's twoness—a Negro, an American—two souls warring in one body . . . "this double consciousness." In AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I, I said, "As Baldwin is watching James, so I am watching Baldwin. For I too belong to this unfolding tale of the American double consciousness: I am evidence. I and my 'kind' " (p. 120). It is indeed an eternally-present classic American "dualism."

THE SUPPLE-FINGERS MYTH: CINDERELLA AS SECRETARY

Potter's Argument:	**Responses to Potter's Argument:**
16 "Where the work of the frontier called for the strong back and the powerful muscles of a primeval man, the work of the city . . . called for the supple fingers and the ready adaptability of a young woman."	Just here I must relinquish my opportunity to have the last word in this response to Potter and give over the essay to Judy Gustafson, my sometime co-author, sometime typist for this volume.

"I'M NO TYPIST," SHE SAID SKIPPINGLY

When typing the paragraph on the opportunities of the cities, I broke into hysterical laughter, causing Prof. Chmaj to inquire, "What's so funny?" She's asked me to share my explanation with you:

As I mistyped "the work of the city . . . has called for the supple fingers and ready adaptability of a young woman . . ." the absurdity of the myth behind the statement hit me in a vulnerable spot—my supple fingers and their seemingly endless ability to hit the wrong key. I do not attribute such skill to the patient guidance of my typing teacher (a man), as the "D" I received for the course testifies. (All the guys in class finished with A's and B's.) Nor do I attribute my typing ability to the less-than-primeval muscles (as compared to the primeval muscles Potter attributes to men) I developed from four years of pushing a camera around the university TV studio (although they did help me hold my own beside the camera-men). But then, a young woman is readily adaptable. A person who can focus and zoom with one hand while tilting the pan-handle with the other should be co-ordinated enough to master a keyboard, right? Wrong. Or as a piano teacher told a friend of mine after her first and last lesson, "You're no Horowitz."

All of which is to suggest that Potter's theory on the city's role in female emancipation is based on the stereotyped assumption of woman's innate digital agility, whether as a secretary or a pianist. Not all blacks are born tap-dancers; not all women are born typists. — J.G.

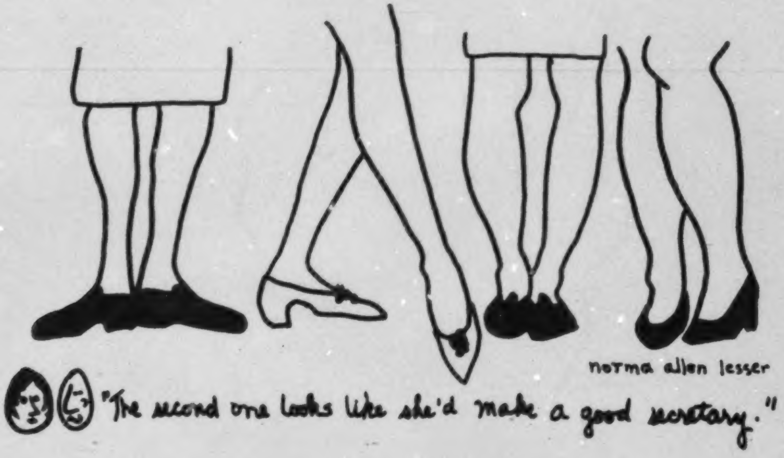

norma allen lesser
"The second one looks like she'd make a good secretary."

Figure 3. reprinted from OFF OUR BACKS (March 19, 1970), p. 5

CHAPTER THREE

The Decline of American Women, Then and Now

THE CHART STORY

In the myth-versus-reality ledger, the "Chart Story" on these next few pages belongs unquestionably on the "reality" side. Dealing as they do with the subject of women in the labor force, the charts serve to introduce Joan Hoff Wilson's historical analysis and give some needed attention to the issue of women in the American economy.

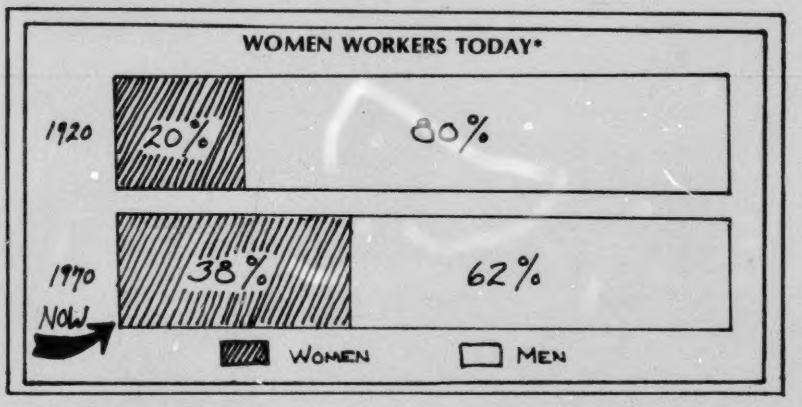


Figure 4: During the last 50 years the ranks of women workers have risen from only 1 out of 5 to almost 2 out of 5 of all workers. Over this period the profile of the average woman worker has changed greatly—from that of the young (age 28) single factory worker or clerk of 1920 to that of the older (age 39) married woman of today who may be found in any of a great many occupations.

The charts themselves tell the story. It begins with the question raised by the chart above, which reveals that the female percentage of the labor force has almost doubled in fifty years, so that 2 out of 5 workers today are women. The question is: where are they? What kind of jobs do they have? as compared to the past? as compared to men?

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*"Women Workers Today" is a report from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Women's Bureau; Washington, D.C. 20210. Charts E-H are reprinted from "Underutilization of Women Workers" (revised 1971), Workplace Standards Administration, Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor.

WOMEN'S SHARE IN PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WORK HAS DECLINED

[Women as Percent of Total Employed, All Occupations and Professional and Technical Occupations, 1940-69]

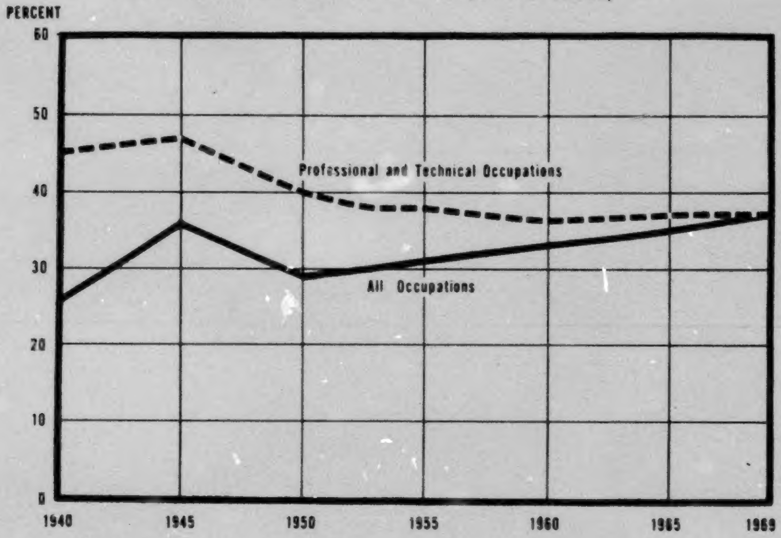
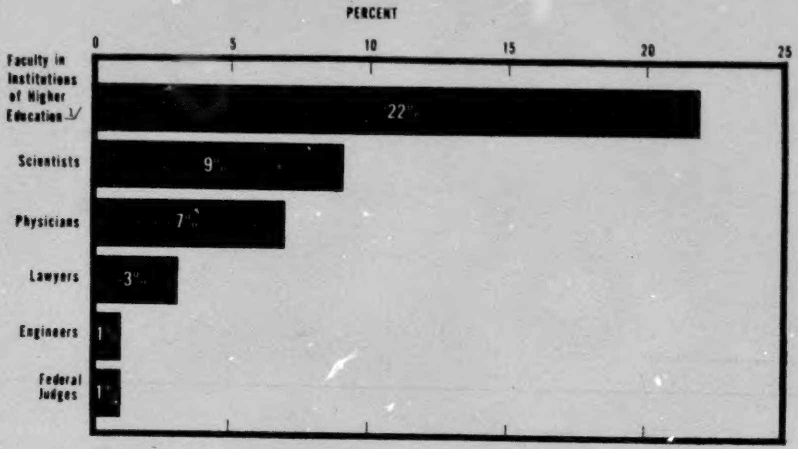


Figure 5: Although the number of women employed in professional and technical occupations has almost tripled since 1940, women are a smaller proportion of all professional and technical workers today than they were before World War II. Women represented 37% of all professional and technical workers in 1969 as compared with 45% in 1940. In contrast, the proportion of women among all workers increased from 26% to 37% over the same period.

A first possibility that springs to mind is that the large increase in the labor force must have come in professional and technical occupations, the prevailing belief being that since the days when they were discouraged from entering "men's" occupations, women have come a long way (baby). *Figure 5*, with its explanation, reveals that this conclusion is far from true, that in fact women have been pushed down in percentages in these areas.



WOMEN ARE INADEQUATELY REPRESENTED IN LEADING PROFESSIONS

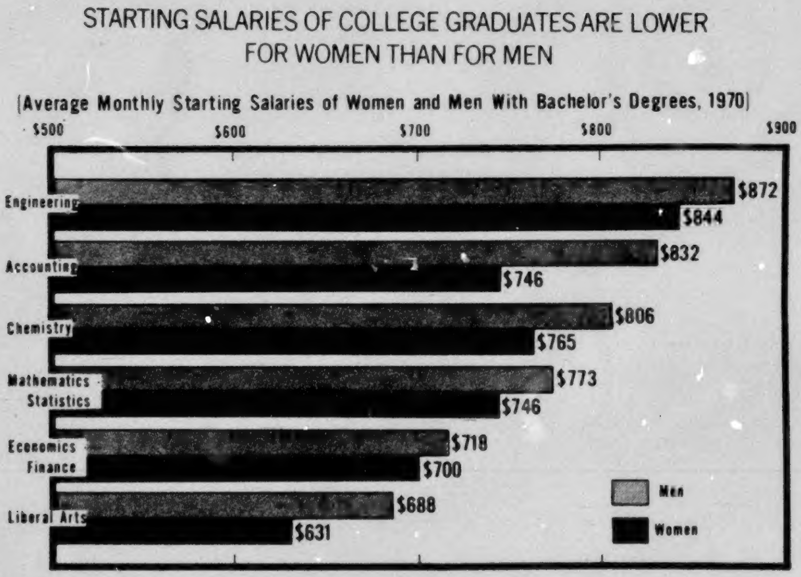
(Women as Percent of Total Employed, Selected Professions)

1/ Includes other professional staff.

Figure 6: Women hold a disproportionately small share of positions in leading professions despite their 37% share of all professional and technical occupations in 1969. Although women traditionally have made up a large part of the teacher corps, in recent years only 22% of the faculty and other professional staff in institutions of higher learning were women. This is a considerably smaller proportion than they were in 1940 (28%), 1930 (27%), or 1920 (26%) and only slightly above the 20% they were in 1910.

Women are heavily represented in health fields, but in 1968 only 7% of all physicians were women. Similarly, women had only token representation among scientists (9%), lawyers (3%), and engineers (1%). ("Underutilization of Woman Workers," pp. 10-11.)

In the case of *Figure 6*, the explanation beneath the chart may say more than the chart itself, but to those of us in higher education who have finally become cognizant of the extent to which women have been progressively eliminated (in percentages) from our profession, there may be some small comfort in knowing how much worse off they are in other professions—where there has also been a decline since the 1920's, but not quite as dramatic as the decline for the teacher corps described. Where, then are all the new women workers?

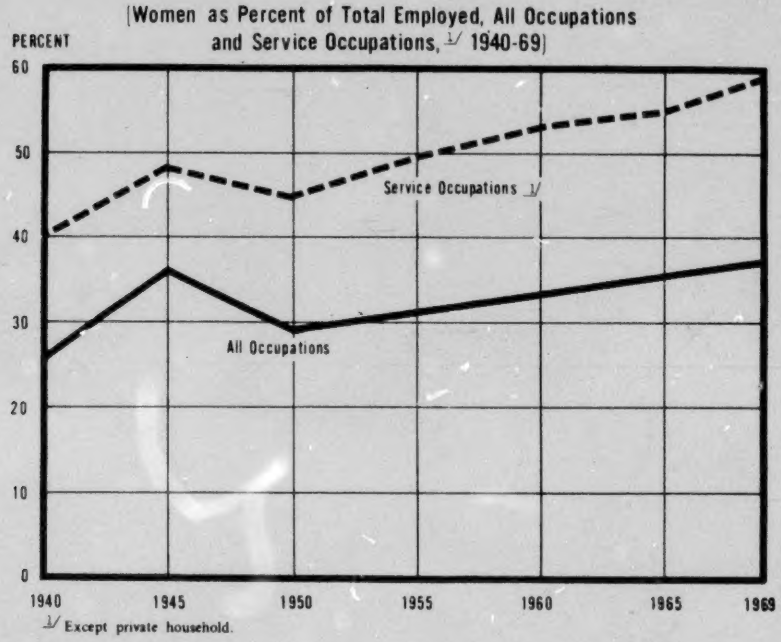


STARTING SALARIES OF COLLEGE GRADUATES ARE LOWER FOR WOMEN THAN FOR MEN

(Average Monthly Starting Salaries of Women and Men With Bachelor's Degrees, 1970)

Figure 7: Average monthly starting salaries offered to 1970 women college graduates in six fields of interest by 110 business and industrial firms ranged from $18 to $86 less than the salaries offered to men college graduates in the same fields. Monthly starting salaries for women were highest and not far below those of men in engineering ($844, women; $872, men). In accounting, however, where salaries being offered to men were almost as high as in engineering, the gap between the salaries of women and men was the largest (women, $746; men, $832). Salary differentials between men and women were lowest in the fields of economics and finance (women, $700; men, $718) and mathematics and statistics (women, $746; men, $773). ("Underutilization of Women Workers," pp. 12-13.)

Digressing a bit for *Figure 7*, one can see in comparative salaries clear proof of sex discrimination in the employment of college graduates—one kind of reflection of the decline condoned in the professions, mirroring the tendency to discourage women from entering them. Women do NOT get equal pay for equal work, even though many continue to think they do, and even though the law requires that they should. An amusing (or not-so-amusing) sidelight on the comment below the chart is the absence of reference to Liberal Arts, lowest on the totem pole for BOTH men and women (but dramatically worse for women), despite the fact that educational preparation required tends to be considerably greater than for the other professions listed above.



WOMEN ARE INCREASING AMONG WORKERS IN LESS SKILLED JOBS

Figure 8: In contrast to the declining proportion of women among professional and technical workers, the proportion of women in the less skilled and lower paid service occupations is increasing. Women were 59% of all service workers (except private household) in 1969 as compared with 40% in 1940. ("Underutilization of Women Workers," p. 14-15.)

Figure 8 provides the denouement. The answer to the question, where have all the women workers gone? In the polite language of the Department of Labor Women's Bureau, they are held down to "less skilled" jobs, their talent and education are "underutilized." In the angrier inner circles of the women's movement, such charts are proof of the "woman-as-nigger" thesis, the demotion of women to "flunky" or "slave labor" status; they lead Barbara Burris to ask, in her "Fourth World Manifesto," "Doesn't everyone know the statistics yet?" As a matter of fact, they don't. Perhaps the charts will help.

WOMAN AS A DECLINING FORCE IN AMERICAN HISTORY*

JOAN HOFF WILSON
Department of History
California State University, Sacramento

*Paper delivered at the joint fall meeting of the Southern and Northern California chapters of the American Studies Association at California State Polytechnic College, San Luis Obispo, November 7, 1971.

This paper questions a commonly held assumption about the contemporary role played by women in American society. Today's woman is told that she's "come a long way," and she probably believes it. To the degree that those in the current women's movement accept this assumption they are likely to commit the same political and ideological errors of earlier feminists;[1] to the degree that women outside the movement accept it they are prevented from confronting the true nature of their modern cultural, economic and political functions.[2] The following analysis suggests that in certain respects women have declined rather than risen as a vital force in American life since the colonial period.

Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, I think that it can be argued that, in general, upper-class women in the western world have steadily experienced increased dysfunctionalism since the Middle Ages. In particular American women, with the exception of those in frontier areas, have experienced dysfunctionalism at an accelerated rate since the American Revolution—an event which did not simply ignore the rights of women, but actually set them back. This fact was not immediately recognized because of the important contribution frontier women made in the settlement of the West and because of the industrial revolution which took place in the United States after 1800. The latter provided first lower-class women and then middle-class women with unprecedented opportunity for employment outside the home in factories and offices, but it did not (and has not) raised the socio-economic status or self-image of the majority of working women.[3]

The more insidious aspects of the economic "opportunities" afforded women by the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century were not recognized by most women at least, until recently. Only since World War II have any significant number of women begun to realize that being exploited as cheap labor outside the home actually increased their economic vulnerability by making them subject to technological unemployment and increased their economic dysfunctionalism by making them the most marginal components of the labor force, with little bargaining power even when they are unionized. They have also begun to realize that however necessary housework and child

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The Chart Story has a long past at its back, a past extending to colonial days and the era of Puritan woman. What happened then and afterward—through the American Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Terrible Nineteenth Century, to the Great Decline of the Twentieth—describes an image of American history we are unaccustomed to seeing, but an image that all serious scholars and feminists ought to memorize. Joan Wilson outlines that image brilliantly, incorporating the relevant statistics and the major sutdies on the subject in her overview here.—BC.

care have been for the success of industrialization, they have been given no monetary value and remain outside the money economy of the United States. As a result, such women's work is, by definition, inferior and valueless, according to prevailing economic and cultural standards,[4] while their only recognized economic function is that of consumer.

This condition of dual economic exploitation inside and outside the home exists in almost all industrialized countries, but it is particularly evident today in the United States where, apart from youth, in general it is the white and ethnic minority women who are on the bottom rung of the economic ladder. Hence they are the most expendable and least rewarded economic group in the country.[5] In this sense, there is really little difference between modern monopoly capitalism and state socialism as far as women are concerned. Job opportunities for women outside the home will not ensure greater liberation in the sense of freedom or independence unless they are accompanied by new cultural values which redefine meaningful functions for both men and women. This is why working women in the United States, the USSR, and many other technological societies find themselves carrying an unrewarded "double work load" and working in the less prestigious professions.[6]

In addition to suffering from the dual economic exploitation characteristic of both capitalism and socialism in advanced societies, the non-economic functions of twentieth-century American woman have been systematically reduced (via Freud and the Feminine Mystique) to the role of sex object, social adornment, childbearer and child-raiser. In all likelihood, future population controls will drastically reduce the importance of the last two, leaving women with few recognized non-economic functions except the cultural ones associated with objectified and exhibitionistic sexuality.

As a result, more and more middle-class women are educated to do literally nothing except "love" within the confines of the nuclear family or exist as sex objects outside of it. And yet they are not qualified for either idealized role. Seldom meeting society's arbitrary standards for female beauty, they frantically experiment with one cosmetic aid after another. At the same time they "have no special capacity for love" because they are conditioned from childhood to live vicariously through others and to have low opinions of themselves and other women. Without a positive independent view of self, no one—female or male—is capable of the "emotional distance that is one of the real requirements of love."[7] As Germaine Greer has said, most modern women "cannot love because . . . they do not rejoice in seeing their own kind." Hence it is no surprise that the stereotypic American housewife is often described as a person who beautifies herself artificially and who does not love her husband or children but instead tries to dominate them and live out her own frustrated ambitions through them.[8] The pettiness and narrowness of such an existence is not only evidence of self-hatred but of loss of meaningful function even within the family unit.

There is yet another irony to consider. Women received the right to vote in the United States in 1920 at the very moment when national electoral politics was breaking down, it seems to me, into a meaningless choice between Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dumber—that is, when their votes could not be really significant. The meaninglessness of choice resulted from new technology and new ideas—the manipulation of public opinion through new developments in mass communication and the pluralist assumption that "packaged" candidates and campaigns are necessary for efficient operation of the economic and political system.[9] Similarly, it now appears as if women are going to receive equal pay for equal work and equal economic opportunity to compete for jobs at precisely the time that technological advancements have made traditional labor, so honored by the Puritan ethic of hard work, increasingly obsolete. Equal pay for equal work will disintegrate into a meaningless shibboleth if it comes to pass that there are fewer jobs in the future, despite the politicans' promises that there will be more.[10] Moreover, the currently popular idea of finding "creative" or "interesting" jobs for women outside the home when such jobs no longer exist for most men, only blurs further the very real possibility of future economic dysfunctionalism for both women and men in this society.[11]

Although there is no denying that modern women have found their position in the United States from a legal and material point of view considerably improved over that of their ancestors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[12] it is possible that these gains have been more than offset in terms of their deterioration from a psychological and functional point of view.[13] Legal rights and material well-being provide only the minimum prerequisites for obtaining a sense of self-worth and self-esteem in any society. There are no substitutes for meaningful and valued function in that society. It is also possible that "conditions for women, in some respects at least, were more favorable in colonial days than they became in the early nineteenth century," or than they appear in the third quarter of the twentieth century. As Elisabeth Anthony Dexter first suggested in 1924, there are "evidences of independence and initiative on the part of [colonial] women, and . . . acceptance of these qualities by [that] society" which no longer exist today.[14]

For one thing the very scarcity of women in the colonial period gave them a functional status far beyond their natural ability to procreate.[15] Puritan women in particular seemed to possess an intrinsic sense of worth and an independent streak. Not only did their religion insist they be educated enough to read the Bible and share spiritual equality with men, but it even granted them a slight edge over men when it came to obtaining redemption from sin, since they had more time "to Employ in the more immediate Service" of caring for their souls. Not only were Puritan women equal in the eyes of God, but very often they were also equal in the eyes of their fathers. It is in Puritan Massachusetts that we first see the development of what Page Smith has called the "potency of daughterhood" in the figure of Anne Hutchinson. But this unusually strong father-daughter relationship also developed between a number of well-known colonial women and their fathers, such as Margaret Brent, Jane Colden Farquhar, Eliza Lucas Pinckney, Mercy Otis Warren and Theodosia Burr. As long as they did not become heretics (as Anne made the mistake of doing) such women whose fathers paid particular attention to their education could and did assume the roles of religious instructors, scientists, secular teacher and authors.[16]

Outside the realm of religion, Puritan women often emerged as strong competent partners in their marriages. Because these marriages were largely based on mutual consent rather than obligatory family contracts, a very positive kind of practical romantic love flourished among the Puritans as young men and women chose their mates. Initially at least, this Puritan practice was related to the preservation of the faith as well as to traditional property interests in arranging the good marital deal. As this practice spread throughout the colonies, marriages in which wives played strong, independent roles, such as those of Anne Bradstreet, Sarah Edwards, Ester Burr and Abigail Adams, seem not to have been considered unusual until after the American Revolution. Then such husband-wife relationships virtually disappeared, at least from public view, until the middle of the nineteenth century.

In addition to the recognized functions of Puritan women within their religion and marriages, many colonial women made a living in occupations which became closed to later generations as sex stereotyping increased after the American Revolution. For example, we know a good deal about prominent women actresses, authors, printers, landowners and religious leaders of the colonial period, but have much less data about the far larger group of women who were innkeepers, shopkeepers and midwives. We know even less about those who were medical practitioners, nurses, teachers, blacksmiths, lawyers, jailors, sextons, and hunters, or the craftswomen who served as silversmiths, tinworkers, shoemakers, tanners, gunsmiths, barbers and butchers.[18]

It is true that very often women found themselves in those roles because of their husbands' absence or death; nonetheless, it was not considered "inappropriate" according to the prevailing norms of the day to engage in such occupations, to carry on the family business if widowed, or to start one's own business while still married. That women could fulfill such independent economic functions successfully also shows the degree to which English common law, systematized by Sir William Blackstone, was circumvented in colonial America, made to conform with the Puritan work ethic. This meant married as well as single women could engage in these essential economic activities. It has been estimated that approximately ten percent of the merchants in the 1770s were women compared to only a little over four percent by 1900. In addition to engaging in commerce, colonial women monopolized the practice of midwifery and had "unlimited freedom" in offering their services as amateur doctors and healers. Yet after the American Revolution, over the course of the nineteenth century, women were effectively barred from entering the field of medicine and other prestigious professions.[19]

In contrast to their freedom and independence in economic and professional matters, colonial women obviously were quite limited in political influence. But even in this field they occasionally asserted themselves with a vigor seldom matched by modern American women, especially after they obtained the right to vote. Although custom allowed propertied colonial women to vote on local issues before 1776, they had no formal political rights and their civic aspirations were most often filled vicariously through their husbands or other male members of their families. Such was certainly the case of Abigail Adams. There were a handful of exceptions like the women who participated in Bacon's Rebellion and Margaret Brent, a spinster who served as executrix for Governor Leonard Calvert in the seventeenth century, and actually received the right to vote in the Maryland Assembly. Later some women did lend support to the cause of revolution after 1763 by forming the Daughters of Liberty. Others aided the collective efforts to obtain repeal of the Stamp and Tea acts by boycotting English goods and refusing to drink tea. How widespread these patriotic efforts by revolutionary women were is not evident from existing documents. But what is clear is that male revolutionaries made a conscious effort to enlist their support and then (in typical radical fashion) conveniently ignored the political and legal rights of women after Independence was won. (For example, women were granted a number of political rights during the first years of the Revolution, including the right to vote in several of the newly created states. Suffrage was quickly rescinded, however, beginning with New York in 1777 and ending with New Jersey in 1807.)[20]

In general, there appears to have been a greater tendency for southern colonial women, rather than their northern sisters, to take direct political action by presenting petitions to local officials. Julia Cherry Spruill has noted that the petitions drafted by southern women in the seventeenth century disclosed "no doubts regarding their ability to understand and explain the political issues of the time or their right to interpose in matters of public concern" Spruill thinks that this political boldness was due to the more rural character of southern plantation life and to "the general influence of the frontier" when it appeared in other sections of colonial America. But after the American revolution, the "vigor and self-reliance of women in wealthier families" declined and there was a "lessening of their influence in public matters." These post-revolutionary women, according to Spruill, "appear[ed] disinclined to admit any interest in public policy and anxious lest their private requests be mistaken for an unwomanly meddling in politics" and were "somewhat effeminate and timid" compared to their colonial ancestors.[21]

This diminished political interest on the part of women in the last quarter of the eighteenth century occurred simultaneously with the birth of the American factory system discussed below. There was also an increased interest in the formal education of women through the newly-created female seminaries, which stressed ornamental rather than utilitarian knowledge, at the very time when specialized academic training was supplanting the apprenticeship method for obtaining a profession. The historical moment also coincided with the appearance of a much more conventional sex-typed concept of the "proper" role for women to play in the newly-formed republic.[22]

Perhaps the greatest setback for women after the revolution came with the male mania for codifying American laws. These had originally been based on English common law as it had been adapted to fit New World conditions. As far as women were concerned, however, there was a tendency not to "admit in words some conditions which in the exigencies of previous times had been tacitly permitted." In this manner, the economic and social privileges of women were legally curtailed, their recent revolutionary activity minimized, and their future interest in politics discouraged. A final reason for the general regression in the legal status and economic condition of the American woman after 1776, except for those on the frontier, was that prosperity encouraged self-made middle-class men to obtain more luxuries, and the useless ornamental woman becoming one of them. This tendency to protect and isolate their female possessions from work and life increased with the influx of socially objectionable immigrants after the Civil War. It was reinforced by the appearance of the modern nuclear family—itself a product of industrialization.[23]

In sum, all of these post-revolutionary developments contributed not only to the demise of political interests on the part of women, but also to their increased dysfuntionalism, both inside and outside the home, over the course of the nineteenth century.

Prior to 1795, with the exception of the writings of Benjamin Franklin and Enos Hitchcock, there was little secular speculation about women's position in American society. While family duties were naturally regarded as the first concern of women by the Puritans and other colonials, their necessary economic functions, especially in marginal farm operations on the frontier, were seldom questioned. The same was true of their initial relation to industrialization. On December 5, 1791, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton officially recognized the contributions of women in the production of cloth, under the traditional "domestic system" within each household. But at the same time, he recommended in his well-known REPORT ON MANUFACTURERS that women and children be utilized in the factory production of cotton goods, which recent technological developments had made a reality. Thus Hamilton argued: "The husbandman himself experiences a new source of profit and support from the increased industry of his wife and daughters; invited and stimulated by the demands of neighborhood manufactories." Then he added that the cotton mills also provided employment to those "persons who would otherwise be idle (and in many cases a burden on the communiyt)." According to Hamilton, this was particularly true of women and children who "are rendered more useful . . . by manufacturing establishments than would otherwise be."[24]

Thus, economic nationalists like Hamilton openly recognized that the labor of women would have to be utilized, i.e., exploited, if the nation were to industrialize. This position was reinforced in the 1790s by the male moralists of the day who preached that women who did not take up such work would be "doomed to idleness and its inseparable attendants, vice and guilt," Through the War of 1812 at least, this alliance between economic spokesmen and those moralists imbued with the old Puritan concept of hard work temporarily prolonged the unstated pre-revolutionary idea the "woman's place was . . . not in the home, . . . but wherever her 'more important' work was."[25] In other words, the essential economic contribution of the post-revolutionary American woman to the burgeoning textile industry momentarily outweighed her role as wife and mother in the patriotic public rhetoric of the 1790s. But this was not to last.

For example, according to Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, it became abundantly evident after 1800 that "as women were accepted in the labor force they [were] used to reduce costs," not to raise the power or prestige of women. Only in retrospect, however, can we see that what was truly significant about the employment of women in manufacturing throughout the nineteenth century was not that their labor was exploited because it was cheaper and because they could be used as strikebreakers. This was readily admitted at the time. What is now evident is that (1) there initially were no clear socio-economic distinctions drawn between working women and middle-class women until after the Civil War;[26] that (2) the working woman was expected to fulfill all of her household duties in addition to those of her outside employment; and that (3) as more sophisticated, but heavier machinery was introduced, the proportion of women actually engaged in factory work or machine-oriented operations dropped.

In other words, not only did the working woman in the United States lose social prestige in the last half of the nineteenth century, but she also began to suffer from a dual work load and from technological unemployment. This latter was especially evident in the textile industry—the very type of manufacturing enterprise that had first offered her employment. In this industry, with the exception of the production of knit goods, where 90 out of every 100 workers were women in the early nineteenth century, there were only 42 women per 100 workers by 1900. (This was to drop to 15 per 100 by 1950, and 9 per 100 in the course of the 1960s.) Clearly in the textile industry, as technology improved it "pushed men in at the top, women down, and children out."[27]

While the most impressive proportionate decline in female labor in the nineteenth century took place in the textile industry, the same pattern was repeated in other industries—the operation of sewing machines, the manufacture of clothing in general, the printing business, dairy production. The percentage of women in the tobacco industry, in food production, watchmaking and glassmaking *did* increase after the Civil War but always to the degree that these occupations lost their prestige status as crafts requiring highly specialized skills. On the whole, therefore, despite the increase in the number of women employed in factories or mechanical pursuits, from 225,000 in 1850 to a million in 1900, the "proportion of women to men dropped from 23 to 19 in 100" because of technological improvements which produced technological unemployment. These women workers constituted a little less than one-quarter of all female employees at the turn of the century, when women in general were only 18 percent of the labor force.[28]

Most of the remaining three-quarters who made up the total number of working women in 1900 could be found on farms or in private homes as domestics. For example, there were 770,000 women over sixteen years old engaged in "agricultural pursuits" at the turn of the century and approximately 1,950,000 (nearly 40% of all employed women) in domestic and personal service jobs, which included at this time nurses and midwives as well as waitresses. Until 1940, domestic service remained the largest single occupation for women, while the percentage of women engaged in farm work decreased drastically to its present low, only 2 percent. Domestic service still ranks high among the total number of women employed, out-distanced only by secretarial, factory and retail sales work. The latest census figures show that at the present time women make up 61 percent of all service workers against 39 percent of 1940. Nonwhite women constitute the largest group of women in this low status work category; that is, 49 percent of all employed nonwhite women.[29]

Census figures for 1970 also show that clerical work now claims most women workers. This occupation has been to the twentieth century working woman what the textile industry initially was for her early nineteenth century counterpart. Today three out of every four clerical workers are women, compared to two out of three in 1960; one out of two in 1940; and one out of 225 in 1900. Like the technological unemployment that occurred within the textile industry, however, it is entirely possible that in the relatively near future many women office workers will find themselves replaced by phonetic typewriters and other sophisticated electronic equipment. Another white-collar profession which has increasingly attracted women in the twentieth century is teaching at the elementary and secondary levels. However, on the basis of demographic projections it is estimated that in the 1970s there will be twice as many new teaching graduates as positions for them. As the bottom drops out of those fields in which women have concentrated and specialized in this century, they will be forced into taking "lower status, lower paying jobs, thus creating an even worse squeeze for low-income workers."[30]

What these and other statistics for the twentieth century show is that while the percentage of all adult women in the labor force had increased from 23 percent in 1920 to 40 percent in 1970 (now approximately 37 percent of the total labor force), the status of women within the ranks of labor has actually declined despite the fact that most of them are in white-collar jobs. This is because, in the last fifteen years especially, women have moved in but not up the labor scale in accordance with their increased levels of education. Even the median earnings of full-time women workers, which was 59 percent of the earnings of men in 1970 and 1971, was higher in 1955, when it stood at 64 percent; and this gap appears to be widening as more and more women enter the labor market. Moreover, sex-typing of jobs has actually increased as far as the hiring of women is concerned, while technology and changing mores are desegregating most jobs in the professions, the church, education, recreation and public accommodation. This means that the percentage of women employed in the so-called "female jobs" (as secretary, saleswoman, general private household worker, elementary school teacher, bookkeeper, waitress and professional nurse) has increased significantly since 1940, while the percentage of women in all professions and technical jobs of a scientific nature has declined slightly from 42 percent to 40 percent.[31]

Since women are not being accorded better jobs in accordance with their improved education, it is not surprising to find that the educational gap between men and women has also increased since 1940. In 1964, for example, there were proportionately fewer women in higher education than there were in 1920—22 percent compared with 28 percent. Between 1940 and 1964, the number of college and university women enrolled for degree credit at all levels declined by 5.5 percent, with only one out of ten PhDs awarded to women in 1964 compared to one out of seven in the 1930s, and only one out of three BAs and MAs compared to two out of five for the same time period. Only 14 percent of all working women are currently employed as professional or technical workers.[32]

If one adds to these discouraging trends in employment and educational figures for women the fact that there are proportionately no more women in American public life today than there were in 1925, the claim that women have "come a long way" appears all the more questionable. Between 1916 and 1970 women have occupied only two percent of all legislative positions and even fewer executive and judicial positions at the national level. During that time, there have been 66 women in the U.S. House of Representatives, 10 in the Senate, 2 in the cabinet, 10 women ministers or ambassadors and 3 women federal judges. There have never been more than 20 women Congressional representatives at any one time since 1920, and between 1960 and 1970, the number of women in Congress declined from 17 to 11. As a result of the 1972 election, the number now stands at 14 (all in the House of Representatives), exactly what it had been in the previous 92nd Congress as of July 1971, when 4 resignations reduced the figure temporarily to a new low of 10. Given this dismal elective and appointive record, it is little wonder that one study of women has recently concluded that there has been a steady decline since the 1920s in their "contribution to the public welfare in America."[33] However, women members of Congress, who had declined in the 1960s from a high point of 17 to a low of 11, are currently at 15. This is one more than the 92nd Congress had as of July, 1971. Moreover, in the 1972 state legislatures there were 344 women. In 1973 there will be 424, of whom 338 were elected in the November 1972 election. This is a significant increase of 18% on the state level and perhaps represents the most encouraging infiltration of women into politics since 1920.

At the very least, the above figures and analysis suggest that the decline of women as a force in American society has been relative. The American woman is materially better off than her sisters anywhere else in the world and she has more legal and political rights than her ancestors did, despite the civil inequalities which remain. Although greater educational opportunities are open to women living in this country today than was the case in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it is highly doubtful that women are receiving anything like an equal education in our school systems, nor will they until there are equal social expectations for men and women in this society. As it now stands women emerge from most educational institutions psychologically crippled in terms of their self-image and self-expectations, seldom encouraged to develop their intellectual capabilities beyond the bare minimum expected of female students.[34] Instead of producing women who are proud of their sex and minds and confident of themselves as human beings, more often than not our colleges and universities continue to produce the traditional variety of female academic eunuchs, or women who learned long ago that their only expected educational goal is to find the "right" man to marry.

In addition to the evidence showing how women are programmed to fail by our educational institutions, the best index to their relative decline in American society can be found in the portrayal of them in fiction, in textbooks and in the mass media. It is not accidental that the best-known feminist books of the last few years have been devoted in part or entirely to a critique of modern male authors.[35] From Henry Miller to Norman Mailer, and from "Momism" to PORTNOY'S COMPLAINT, twentieth century women have been described with frightening consistency, especially since World War II, as either inferior subhuman beings or potentially evil and castrating creatures who are "certain to be destroyed or hopelessly embittered unless they devote themselves exclusively to their domestic duties and lives as wives and mothers."[36] It is not that this image of women is new to the history of literature, but it does seem more pervasive than in previous periods, where at least a more balanced schizoid male image of women prevailed. Women have, after all, survived centuries during which men have painted contradictory word pictures of them; that is, as the embodiment of both all that is good and asexual, symbolized by the virtuous Virgin Mary, and all that is evil, including unsatiable sexuality, symbolized by the enigmatic Eve. As women have been extolled as morally superior and castigated as intellectually inferior, they have learned to live with such contradictions by refusing to examine their own true natures. Thus, they have been the object of man's love and hate over the centuries, but in this century modern literature has tended to resolve the earlier contradictory theories about women by systematically reducing them to ciphers through unmitigated scorn and contempt.[37]

The picture does not improve when we turn to textbook and advertising images of the modern woman. Here she is either the vacuous, passive girlchild, the untouchable sex object, or the mindless housewife trying every available product to make herself and her home more beautiful.[38] Some contemporary feminists also claim that the very language used to describe or talk about women has become more derogatory and sexist in this century. Germaine Greer is convinced that this is true for the King's English; the same may be true, it is suggested, of the American brand of English. From chick, bunny, cow, tomato, honey, sugar and the other varieties of animals and foods currently used to refer to American women, to the most offensive insults and degrading epithets related to female sexuality or lack thereof, our language and humor often reflect a view of women that is both dehumanizing and degrading.[39] Whether such words are more common now than in the past, I do not claim to know; that they are more publicly pervasive, I do not doubt.

There will be little or no improvement at either this linguistic level, however, or at the other levels of society where American women are currently experiencing derision, discrimination or dysfunctionalism, until women themselves are willing to face their deteriorating condition honestly and collectively. It is self-defeating for the individual woman to continue to believe in the Madison Avenue slogan: "You've come a long way baby."

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1 Like most successful American reformers of this century the suffragists sold out the broader humanitarian aims of their movement for individual pieces of social and economic legislation leaving the socio-economic system basically the same. By concentrating finally on the single issue of the vote they exaggerated its importance for women in particular and the country in general.

2 I am thinking in particular of middle-class women because they live on the cutting edge of our technological society. Although they are still in the slow, painful process of becoming aware of the true nature of their deteriorating condition in this society, soon other groups, including most men, will encounter the situation in which there are proportionately fewer jobs and fewer children. Women in the United States are simply experiencing this condition of absolute functionlessness earlier than other members of society. I am using the term "function" to mean the value assigned to roles performed by individuals or groups according to the prevailing norms of their time.

3 Page Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND: WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), pp. 37-76; Viola Klein, THE FEMININE CHARACTER: HISTORY OF AN IDEOLOGY (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, Ltd., 1946), pp. 9-10, 13-14; Carl N. Degler, OUT OF OUR PAST: THE FORCES THAT SHAPED MODERN AMERICA (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), pp. 57-60, 351-61; Pauline Farseth and Theodore C. Blegen, eds., FRONTIER MOTHER: THE LETTERS OF GRO SVENDSEN (Northfield, Minn.: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1950), *passim;* Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, TECHNOLOGY AND WOMEN'S WORK (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. vii; Julia Cherry Spruill, WOMEN'S LIFE AND WORK IN THE SOUTHERN COLONIES (New York: Russell and Russell, 1969; a reprint of the original 1938 University of North Carolina Press), pp. 241, 245; Elizabeth Waldman and Kathryn R. Grover, "Children of Women in the Labor Force," MONTHLY LABOR REVIEW, July 1971, pp. 19ff.

4 Margaret Benston, "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation" MONTHLY REVIEW, xxi (September, 1969), pp. 15-16; Germaine Greer, THE FEMALE EUNUCH (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971), pp. 111-12. We should not be misled by statistics showing simply a numerical increase in working women. See, for example: NEW YORK TIMES, April 11, 1971, pp. 1, 60; AFL-CIO, "Status of U.S. Women Workers," FREE TRADE UNION NEWS, xxv, no. 10 (October, 1970); Mickey and John Rowntree, "More on the Political Economy of Women's Liberation," MONTHLY REVIEW, xxi (January, 1970), pp. 26-32. Such statistics are misleading because they do not consider the level at which most women enter the labor force or the fact that the demand for women workers is likely to fall off sharply in the 1970s because of changes in demographic and marriage patterns and greater technological unemployment. See below for a discussion of these problems in addition to Alice Rossi, "Women: Terms of Liberation," ADA WORLD MAGAZINE, January, 1971, p. 6M; and Peter F. Drucker, "The Surprising Seventies," HARPER'S MAGAZINE, July, 1971, pp. 35ff.

5 Benston, "Political Economy of Women's Liberation," pp. 13-27; John and Margaret Rowntree, "The Political Economy of Youth," OUR GENERATION, vi, nos. 1-2 (1969), pp. 155-90; Joreen, "The Fifty-one Percent Minority Group: A Statistical Essay," in Robin Morgan, ed., SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 37-46; Marijean Suelzle,

"Women in Labor," TRANSACTION, November-December, 1970, pp. 52-3; WOMEN: A JOURNAL OF LIBERATION, ii, no. 3, "Women as Workers Under Capitalism" (entire issue); Grace Hutchins, WOMEN WHO WORK (New York: International Publishers, 1934), pp. 7-56.

6 It must always be remembered that it is industrialization *per se* and not one particular form of it that exploits both men and women. Therefore it is simplistic and dangerous for women to equate either the welfare state or socialism with liberation. Yet at the same time it cannot be denied that socialist revolutions have often materially improved the conditions of both men and women in what were formerly un-industrialized countries. Material well-being, however, does not automatically result in freedom from traditional sex-typed roles. For a discussion of this and the similarities between monopoly capitalism and state socialism see: George Lichtheim, "What Socialism Is and Is Not," NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, April 9, 1970, pp. 41-5; Hannah Arendt, "Thoughts on Politics and Revolution," NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, April 22, 1971, p. 14; Rossi, "Women," p. 7M; Herbert Marcuse, ONE-DIMENSIONAL MAN (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 1-55; Janet Weitzner Salaff and Judith Merkle, "Women in Revolution: The Lessons of the Soviet Union and China," BERKELEY JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, xvi (1970), 166-91; William M. Mandel, "Soviet Women and Their Self-Image," paper delivered in May, 1970 at the Far Western Slavic Conference, University of Southern California.

7 Vivian Gornick, "The Women's Liberation Movement!" COSMOPOLITAN, April 1970, p. 143; Eva Figes, PATRIARCHAL ATTITUDES (New York: Stein and Day, 1970), pp. 163, 181.

8 Greer, FEMALE EUNUCH, p. 138. See below for a brief discussion of the image of women in advertising, textbooks, fiction and language, and Una Stannard, "The Mask of Beauty," in Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran, eds., WOMAN IN A SEXIST SOCIETY: STUDIES IN POWER AND POWERLESSNESS (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1971), pp. 118-30.

9 Political pluralism as practiced in the United States "is the steady appeasement of relatively small groups," in response to their organized pressure. It is a system in which groups are encouraged to compete for power. They do so thinking that "equal opportunity means an equal chance to compete for status, income, or power," but in fact the "opportunities to *acquire* power [are]...unequal precisely to the extent that power is [already] unequally distributed." Pluralist campaigns are based on the assumption that the public will "buy" almost any policy or candidate if it or he is packaged in the language of consumerism and promises more material advantages. See: John C. Livingston and Robert C. Thompson, THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED, 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1971), pp. 105-51.

10 For a projection of what the 1970s will really be like on the basis of demographic shifts which will make the general population older rather than younger as in the 1960s, and on the basis of fewer jobs see: Drucker, "Surprising Seventies," pp. 35ff; U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, September 4, 1971, pp. 68ff; SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, July 19, 1971, p. 21.

11 As of the fall of 1970, for example, a Gallup poll showed that 60 percent of all American women were working or wanted part-time or full-time work, but that only half of them were actually employed at the time. According to U.S. Labor Department statistics, of the 40.9 million women who were not in the labor force in 1969, 32.5 million were not working because of family responsibilities; 3.5 million because of school attendance; and 2.3 million because of ill health. Despite these reasons 8 percent or 3.2 million of all these non-

working women said they wanted jobs. These figures indicate that the present economy of the United States with its already high unemployment cannot employ all the women who right now want jobs, let alone all the unemployed males. See: THE GALLUP OPINION INDEX, "The Feminist Movement," Report no. 63, September, 1970, p. 3; AFL-CIO, "Status of U.S. Women Workers"; Barbara Rosen and Maurine Greenwald, "Toward a Radical Analysis of Women's Liberation," NEW UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE (NUC) WOMEN'S NEWSLETTER, no. 7, April 1, 1971, p. 8; Rowntree, "More on the Political Economy of Women's Liberation," pp. 31-2.

12 Mary R. Beard, WOMEN AS A FORCE IN HISTORY (New York: Macmillan Company, 1946), pp. 114-44, *passim*; Leo Kanowitz, WOMEN AND THE LAW: THE UNFINISHED REVOLUTION (Albuquerque, N.M..: University of New Mexico, 1969), *passim*.

13 Phyllis Chesler, "Patient and Patriarch: Women in the Psychotherapeutic Relationship," in Gornick and Moran, WOMAN IN A SEXIST SOCIETY, pp. 251-75. For the relationship of dysfunctionalism to revolutionary change see: Chalmers Johnson, REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), pp. 44-5, 80-1, 106-7; Anthony F.C. Wallace, CULTURE AND PERSONALITY (New York: Random House, 1961), pp. 143-4.

14 Elisabeth Anthony Dexter, COLONIAL WOMEN OF AFFAIRS: WOMEN IN BUSINESS AND THE PROFESSIONS IN AMERICA BEFORE 1776, 2nd ed., rev. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931), pp. vii, xxi-xxii. Although this is a copiously documented book Dexter's thesis has generally been ignored by male historians.

15 Degler, OUT OF OUR PAST, p. 57; Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND, p. 38.

16 Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND, pp. 39-40, 46-7; Mary Sumner Benson, WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA: A STUDY OF OPINION AND SOCIAL USAGE (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), pp. 108-9, 116-9; Geraldine Brooks, DAMES AND DAUGHTERS OF THE YOUNG REPUBLIC (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, 1901), pp. 98-106; Carl Holliday, WOMAN'S LIFE IN COLONIAL DAYS (New York: Frederick Unger Publishing Company, 1922), pp. 70-86; Joan Hoff Wilson, "Dancing Dogs of the Colonial Period: Women Scientists," EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURE, Winter, 1972.

17 Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND, pp. 41-4; Brooks, DAMES AND DAUGHTERS, pp. 84-129, *passim;* Alice Morse Earle, COLONIAL DAMES AND GOOD WIVES (New York: Frederick Unger Publishing Company, 1962; a reprint of the original 1895 edition), pp. 1-44; Holiday, WOMAN'S LIFE IN COLONIAL DAYS, pp. 227-90; Benson, WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA, pp. 123, 128-32; Edmund S. Morgan, THE PURITAN FAMILY (New York: Harper and Row, 1966; reprint of the original 1944 edition), pp. 29-64.

18 Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND, p. 54; Benson, WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA, pp. vii, 181; Spruill, WOMEN'S LIFE AND WORK, pp. 255-313; Earle, COLONIAL DAMES AND GOOD WIVES, pp. 45-87; Holliday, WOMEN'S LIFE IN COLONIAL DAYS, pp. 291-312; Dexter, COLONIAL WOMEN OF AFFAIRS, *passim*.

19 Degler, OUT OF OUR PAST, pp. 59-60; Beard, WOMEN AS A FORCE IN HISTORY, pp. 78-80, 106-21; Holliday, WOMEN'S LIFE IN COLONIAL DAYS, pp. 297-303; Dexter, COLONIAL WOMEN OF AFFAIRS, pp. 37-8; Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, WITCHES, MIDWIVES AND NURSES: A

HISTORY OF WOMEN HEALERS (Oyster Bay, N.Y.: Glass Mountain Pamphlets), pp. 19-32.

20 Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND, p. 54; Spruill, WOMEN'S LIFE AND WORK, pp. 232-54; Earle, COLONIAL DAMES AND GOOD WIVES, pp. 240-75; Dexter, COLONIAL WOMEN OF AFFAIRS, pp. 37, 185; Holliday, WOMEN'S LIFE IN COLONIAL DAYS, pp. 303-12; Joyce Cowley, PIONEERS OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION (New York: Merit Publishers, 1969), p. 4; Edward Pessen, JACKSONIAN AMERICA (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1969), p. 86.

21 Spruill, WOMEN'S LIFE AND WORK, pp. 241-5.

22 Gerda Lerner, "Women's Rights and American Feminism," AMERICAN SCHOLAR, 40 (Spring 1971), pp. 238-9; Benson, WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA, pp. 157-61; Eleanor Flexner, CENTURY OF STRUGGLE (New York: Atheneum, 1970; reprint of original 1959 Belknap edition), pp. 23-4; Keith E. Melder, "Mask of Oppression: The Female Seminary Movement in the U.S." (paper delivered at the meeting of the Organization of American Historians, April, 1972).

23 Benson, WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA, pp. 102-3, 157, 160; Dexter, COLONIAL WOMEN OF AFFAIRS, pp. 190-93. It would not be until women had taken up reform in the name of others in the second quarter of the nineteenth century (abolitionism, temperance, improvement of penal and mental institutions, etc.) that they would once again take up the cause of their own political and civil rights with the suffrage movement after the Civil War.

24 Nancy Wilson Ross, WESTWARD THE WOMEN (New York: Random House, 1944), pp. 172-95; Farseth and Blegen, FRONTIER MOTHER, pp. 99-141; Benson, WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA, pp. 101-2; Jacob E. Cooke, ed., THE REPORTS OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 130-1.

25 Baker, TECHNOLOGY AND WOMAN'S WORK, pp. 6-7. For the development of the cult of idleness among upper middle-class women in the nineteenth century and its deleterious effects upon their minds and spirits, see: C. Willett Cunnington, FEMININE ATTITUDES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1936), pp. 201-35, *passim*.

26 Baker, TECHNOLOGY AND WOMAN'S WORK, pp. 12-3. According to Baker this class distinction did not occur sooner because of the existence of the Lowell group of factories in Massachusetts which initially gave such work a socially respected reputation and because, prior to the Civil War, women had not been conditioned to accept idleness as a virtue. Female school teachers, for example, supplemented their meager incomes by working at a Lowell plant and other women earned money so they could go on to school. While conditions in the Lowell plants left much to be desired, they represented the only (and short-lived) attempt to upgrade factory work for women. In her criticism of the factory system, reformer Catherine Beecher included the Lowell experiment because she realized that the opening of unskilled jobs to women would ultimately mark a disastrous step downward for all those engaged in such work. See: Catherine Beecher, THE EVILS SUFFERED BY AMERICAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN: THE CAUSES AND REMEDY (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1846), p. 7. Unfortunately, few such strong-minded women critics saw the similar danger facing middle-class women as they entered the job market in the early twentieth century as secretaries and clerks.

27 Baker, TECHNOLOGY AND WOMAN'S WORK, pp. 15-23, 113, 147.

28 Baker, TECHNOLOGY AND WOMAN'S WORK, pp. 24-52, 75; Suelzle, "Women in Labor," p. 51.

29 Edythe Cudlipp, UNDERSTANDING WOMEN'S LIBERATION (New York: Paperback Library, 1971), pp. 27-9; Suelzle, "Women in Labor," p. 53; Baker, TECHNOLOGY AND WOMAN'S WORK, pp. 53-79; United States Department of Labor, WOMEN'S OCCUPATIONS THROUGH SEVEN DECADES (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 6; U.S. Department of Labor, HANDBOOK ON WOMEN WORKERS (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 96; NEW YORK TIMES, April 11, 1971, p. 60.

30 Baker, TECHNOLOGY AND WOMAN'S WORK, pp. 212-37; Suelzle, "Women in Labor," p. 52; U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, September 4, 1971, p. 68; Drucker, "Surprising Seventies," p. 38; SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, December 5, 1970, p. 15; THE SPOKESWOMAN, ii, no. 3 (September 1, 1971), p. 3. As it stands now, one-fifth of all women college graduates have no choice but to take jobs as factory workers or clerks if they want to work at all. It has been estimated that the perfection of the phonetic typewriter would immediately eliminate jobs for approximately two million of the country's ten million clerical workers. In the fall of 1971, 122,000 new teacher graduates found work while 104,000 did not.

31 Suelzle, "Women in Labor," pp. 51-2; NEW YORK TIMES, April 11, 1971, pp. 1, 60; SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, July 18, 1972, p. 1; SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, October 16, 1972, p. 6. The public sector has a slightly better hiring record than private corporations as far as women are concerned. In 1969 white males held "only" 89 percent of the jobs paying more than $15,000, while women held 6 percent and nonwhite males 5 percent. In private industry white males held 98 percent of the top jobs with women and nonwhite males dividing the remaining 2 percent. For a comprehensive and complex solution for ending this kind of discrimination see: John Kenneth Galbraith, et al, "The Galbraith Plan to Promote the Minorities," NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE, August 22, 1971, pp. 9ff.

32 Joreen, "The Fifty-One Percent Minority Group," p. 37; Suelzle, "Women in Labor," p. 51; Marlene Dixon, "The Restless Eagles: Women's Liberation 1969," MOTIVE, xxix, nos. 6-7 (March-April, 1969), p. 20; Marlene Dixon, "Why Women's Liberation?" in Elsie Adams and Mary Louise Briscoe, UP AGAINST THE WALL, MOTHER . . . (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1971), pp. 421, 427-8.

33 Martin Gruber, WOMEN IN AMERICAN POLITICS (Oshkosh, Wisc.: Academia Press, 1968), pp. 38, 43-5, 118, 123, 131, 142, 144, 151; Gallup, "Feminist Movement," p. 10; MS, September, 1972, pp. 67-9; William L. O'Neill, EVERYONE WAS BRAVE: THE RISE AND FALL OF FEMINISM IN AMERICA (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), pp. 349-50. Although more American women than ever before ran for office at all levels of government in 1972, no satisfactory explanation has ever been given for the "virtual worldwide tendency of women not to run for or be elected to political office." For partial explanations see: Carl N. Degler, "American Women in Social and Political Affairs—Change and Challenge," THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1967), pp. 11-30; and SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, June 5, 1971, p. 14, for information about the Center for the American Woman in Politics recently established at Rutgers University.

34 Doris L. Pullen, "The Educational Establishment: Wasted Women," in Mary Lou Thompson, ed., VOICES OF THE NEW FEMINISM (Boston: Beacon

Press, 1970), pp. 115-35; Edwin C. Lewis, DEVELOPING WOMAN'S POTENTIAL (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1968), pp. 200-14; Matina Horner, "Fail: Bright Woman," PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, November, 1969, pp. 36ff; Sandra L. and Daryl J. Bem, "Training the Woman to Know Her Place: The Power of a Nonconscious Ideology," in D.J. Bem, BELIEFS, ATTITUDES AND HUMAN AFFAIRS (Belmont, Cal.: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 89-99; Liz Schneider, "Bryn Mawr and the Failure of Feminism," in Gornick and Moran, WOMAN IN A SEXIST SOCIETY, pp. 419-35.

35 See: Mary Ellmann, THINKING ABOUT WOMEN (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1968); Kate Millett, SEXUAL POLITICS (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1970); Germaine Greer, THE FEMALE EUNUCH (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971).

36 Florence Guy Seaburg, "Stereotypes," in Freda Kirchwey, ed., OUR CHANGING MORALITY (London: Kegen, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, 1925), pp. 219-31; Wendy Martin, "Seduced and Abandoned in the New World: The Image of Woman in American Fiction," in Gornick and Moran, WOMAN IN A SEXIST SOCIETY, pp. 226-39.

37 Figes, PATRIARCHAL ATTITUDES, pp. 11, 57, 103-4, 106, 113-4, 116, 122, 131, 149, 184; Florida Scott-Maxwell, WOMEN AND SOMETIMES MEN (New York: Harper and Row, 1971; reprint of original 1957 Knopf edition), pp. 38-9, 44-6, 203-6; H.R. Hays, THE DANGEROUS SEX: THE MYTH OF FEMININE EVIL (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1964), *passim.;* Greer, FEMALE EUNUCH, pp. 6, 59, 101-2, 146, 21-7, 245-69, 338, ftnt. 8; Ellmann, THINKING ABOUT WOMEN, pp. 56-145.

38 Lucy Komisar, "The Image of Women in Advertising," and Marjorie B. U'Ren, "The Image of Women in Textbooks," both in Gornick and Moran, WOMEN IN A SEXIST SOCIETY, pp. 207-25; Alice Embree, "Media Images 1: Madison Avenue Brainwashing—The Facts," and Florika, "Media Images 2: Body Odor and Social Order," both in Morgan, SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL, pp. 175-96.

39 Ethel Strainchamps, "Our Sexist Language," in Gornick and Moran, WOMAN IN A SEXIST SOCIETY, pp. 240-50; Greer, FEMALE EUNUCH, pp. 252, 260-4; Dixon, "Why Women's Liberation?" pp. 431-2.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ADVOCATE and THE MANIFESTO

A COMPARISON OF THEMES AND RHETORIC

Readers are invited to compare and contrast the two pieces of writing that follow, the first dealing with women in Jacksonian America, the second with women today. The first, by Carroll Smith-Rosenburg of the University of Pennsylvania faculty, is the 1971 winner of the annual award by the AMERICAN QUARTERLY for the best article of the year, Ms. Rosenberg being the first woman granted the award in AQ history. The excerpts I have selected focus upon the Female Reform Society of the 1820's and its newspaper, THE ADVOCATE OF MORAL REFORM. [I am grateful to both the author and the QUARTERLY for permission; the piece appeared in Vol. 23 (Oct. 1971), pp. 562-84.] The second article, by Barbara Burris of Wayne State University, consists of excerpts from THE FOURTH WORLD MANIFESTO printed in MOVING OUT (Vol. 2, No. 1, 1972, pp. 52-58); I am once again grateful to that journal's policy of allowing me free use of its materials (copyright retained by the author).

While the first of the two statements is *about* the movement of the 1820's, the second is *by* a spokeswoman for the movement of the present day; yet some striking similarities—and at least one striking difference—can be discovered in the comparison that transcend this difference in perspective. There are similarities in the tone of voice employed, the programs proposed, even on occasion the language used to express similar ideas. Differences may be found not only in the styles of address native to the two eras, separated by a century and a half of history, but also in the attitudes toward the relation of the women's struggle to other reform movements of the time.

Four areas of similarity seem to me especially intriguing. While the reader may prefer to read first and discover these areas for him/herself, I cite them here for later reference and reflection. I am impressed by: (1) the fury of the anti-male attacks; in both THE ADVOCATE and THE MANIFESTO, there is an assumption that male licentiousness vis-a-vis the "colonized" female body is fundamental to the evil of unequal and demeaning treatment; (2) the explicit inclusion of economic factors as contributing to the felt injustice affecting both inequities in the job market and indignities felt by housewives as "unpaid laborers"; this recognition scarcely seems news today for those familiar with women's liberation issues (even Burris assumes everyone knows the statistics by now), but finding these same arguments in the literature of the Jacksonian era may come as something of a surprise—at least, to some readers; (3) the call for a strong organization held together by the concept of sisterhood, an organization *of* women only "separatism" suggested way back *then*?), or at the very least, *for* feminist causes primarily; and (4) the common recognition (reached, apparently, after a period of reluctance among some) that to make sisterhood possible, to achieve the goals of eradicating the indignity and inequality, necessarily meant cutting across strong lines that operate to divide women from one another—across rural and urban lines in the appeal of THE ADVOCATE, across class lines in the call for unity in THE MANIFESTO.

As to the glaring difference between the two (again, I would warn that the reader may prefer to discover first and compare with my notes afterward), it seems to me to surface at the end of the Rosenberg piece and the beginning of the Burris argument. I refer to a difference between the two authors' judgments on the appropriate relation of the women's movement to the other reformist efforts of their respective times. Rosenberg concludes that the importance of the Female Reform Society and its newspaper to American history resides largely in the opportunity it gave for apprenticeship in reform work to its middle-class participants and their successors, a preparation that would eventually serve well not only the women's movement that emerged after the Seneca Falls convention but also the abolitionist movement, the temperance movement, and other reform movements during the decades that followed. By contrast, Burris is incensed by just this attitude as she finds it in the Left today, which she accuses (with more vehemence than even Marge Piercy in "The Grand Coolie Damn," to recall that marvelous title from SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL, or than others who have recently decried the chauvinism among radicals, students and blacks) of seeking to demean the importance of sexual equality or else to use the women's liberation struggle for their own ulterior purposes; the only hope for achieving the goals of equality, she feels, is through a union of women, led by women for women, willing to work for their own cause.

Of Rosenberg, I confess I was tempted to wonder, after my initial delight in discovering the perceptive research beneath the scholarly modesty, whether she herself is too apologetic about her findings, whether she herself inadvertently concedes the lesser importance of the aims of sexual equality to those of other reformers. For example, is there not an unintended hint of condescension in her discussion of THE ADVOCATE's rural constituencies that might be compared to the patronizing attitude Burris condemns among those who characterize contemporary liberationists as "white middle-class women"? If so, the ironic reversal of historic attitudes (from contempt for the rural to contempt for the white middle-class) is startling. However, a warning is clearly in order before such conjectures go very far; what may appear as shyness to some readers of Rosenberg may in fact be, to a large degree, a reflection of the "quarterly" style of the journal for which she writes rather than an accurate reflection of the author's personal views. (See her RELIGION AND THE RISE OF THE CITY for an illustration of her command of the subject and the context within which she has previously seen it.)

Conversely, those academics unaccustomed to acknowledging *any* truths unless they are cast precisely in the "quarterly style" should not interpret Burris' inclination toward "movement" jargon and emotional intensity as meaning that she has less to say. To dismiss the Burris argument as one more radical harangue (which some will want to do) is as great an error, to my mind, as to dismiss the Rosenberg account as one more dry academic report on a mini-moment of American history. In short, I wish to suggest that there may be for some readers an additional discovery in the comparison I have chosen—a discovery that the contrast between the two authors' styles of address serves to mirror or illuminate the reader's own assumptions about what constitutes the proper language for advocacy in manifestoes on behalf of American women.—B.C.

BEAUTY, THE BEAST AND THE MILITANT WOMAN:
A CASE STUDY IN SEX ROLES AND SOCIAL STRESS IN JACKSONIAN AMERICA

CARROLL SMITH-ROSENBERG
University of Pennsylvania

On a spring evening in May 1834, a small group of women met at the revivalistic Third Presbyterian Church in New York City to found the New York Female Moral Reform Society. The Society's goals were ambitious indeed; it hoped to convert New York's prostitutes to evangelical Protestantism and close forever the city's numerous brothels. This bold attack on prostitution was only one part of the Society's program. These self-assertive women hoped as well to confront that larger and more fundamental abuse, the double standard, and the male sexual license it condoned. Too many men, the Society defiantly asserted in its statement of goals, were aggressive destroyers of female innocence and happiness. No man was above suspicion. . . .

. . . .

Women in Jacksonian America had few rights and little power. Their role in society was passive and sharply limited. Women were, in general, denied formal education above the minimum required by a literate early industrial society. The female brain and nervous system, male physicians and educators agreed, were inadequate to sustained intellectual effort. They were denied the vote in a society which placed a high value upon political participation; political activity might corrupt their pure feminine nature. All professional roles (with the exception of primary school education) were closed to women. Even so traditional a female role as midwife was undermined as male physicians began to establish professional control over obstetrics. Most economic alternatives to marriage (except such burdensome and menial tasks as those of seamstress or domestic) were closed to women. Their property rights were still restricted and females were generally considered to be the legal wards either of the state or of their nearest male relative. In the event of divorce, the mother lost custody of her children—even when the husband was conceded to be the erring party. Women's universe was bounded by their homes and the career of father or husband; within the home it was the woman's duty to be submissive and patient.

Yet this was a period when change was considered a self-evident good, and when nothing was believed impossible to a determined free will, be it the conquest of a continent, the reform of society or the eternal salvation of all mankind. The contrast between these generally accepted ideals and expectations and the real possibilities available to American women could not have been more sharply drawn. It is not implausible to assume that at least a minority of American women would find ways to manifest a discontent with their comparatively passive and constricted social role. . . .

. . . .

. . . The founders of the Female Moral Reform Society saw as their principal objective the creation of a woman's crusade to combat sexual license generally and the double standard particularly. American women would no longer willingly tolerate that traditional—and role-defining—masculine ethos which allotted respect to the hearty drinker and the sexual athlete. This age-old code of masculinity was as obviously related to man's social preeminence as it was contrary to society's explicitly avowed norms of purity and domesticity. The subterranean mores of the American male must be confronted, exposed and rooted out.

The principal weapon of the Society in this crusade was its weekly, THE ADVOCATE OF MORAL REFORM. In the fall of 1834, when the Society hired John McDowall as its agent, it voted as well to purchase his jouranl and transform it into a national women's paper with an excusively female staff. Within three years, the ADVOCATE grew into one of the nation's most widely read evangelical papers, boasting 16,500 subscribers. By the late 1830's the Society's managers pointed to this publication as their most important activity.

Two themes dominated virtually every issue of the ADVOCATE from its founding in January 1835, until the early 1850's. The first was an angry and emphatic insistence upon the lascivious and predatory nature of the American male. Men were the initiators in virtually every case of adultery or fornication—and the source, therefore, of that widespread immorality which endangered America's spiritual life and delayed the promised millennium. A second major theme in the ADVOCATE's editorials and letters was a call for the creation of a national union of women. Through their collective action such a united group of women might ultimately control the behavior of adult males and of the members' own children, particularly their sons. . . .

....

A deep sense of anger and frustration characterized the ADVOCATE's discussion of such all-conquering males, a theme reiterated again and again in the letters sent to the paper by rural sympathizers. Women saw themselves with few defenses against the determined male; his will was far stronger than that of woman. Such letters often expressed a bitterness which seems directed not only against the specific seducer, but toward all American men. One representative rural subscriber complained, for example: "Honorable men; they would not plunder; . . . an imputation on their honour might cost a man his life's blood. And yet they are so passingly mean, so utterly contemptible, as basely and treacherously to contrive . . . the destruction of happiness, peace, morality, and all that is endearing in social life; they plunge into degradation, misery, and ruin, those whom they profess to love. O let them not be trusted. Their 'tender mercies are cruel.' "...

....

...This was their commitment to the creation of a feeling of sisterhood among all morally dedicated women. Letters from individuals to the ADVOCATE and reports from auxiliaries make clear, sometimes even in the most explicit terms, that many American women experienced a depressing sense of isolation. In part, this feeling merely reflected a physical reality for women living in rural communities. But since city- and town-dwelling women voiced similar complaints, I would like to suggest that this consciousness of isolation also reflected a sense of status inferiority. Confined by their non-maleness, antebellum American women lived within the concentric structure of a family organized around the needs and status of husbands or fathers. And, such social isolation within the family—or perhaps more accurately a lack of autonomy both embodied in and symbolized by such isolation—not only dramatized, but partially constituted, a differentiation in status. The fact that social values and attitudes were established by men and oriented to male experiences only exacerbated women's feelings of inferiority and irrelevance. Again and again the Society's members were to express their desire for a feminine-sororial community which might help break down this isolation, lighten the monotony and harshness of life, and establish a counter-system of female values and priorities.

The New York Female Moral Reform Society quite consciously sought to inspire in its members a sense of solidarity in a cause peculiar to their sex, and demanding total commitment, to give them a sense of worthiness and autonomy outside woman's traditionally confining role. Its members, their officers forcefully declared, formed a united phalanx twenty thousand strong, "A UNION OF SENTIMENT AND EFFORT AMONG...VIRTUOUS FEMALES FROM MAINE TO ALABAMA." The officers of the New York Society were particularly conscious of the emotional importance of female solidarity within their movement—and the significant role that they as leaders played in the lives of their rural supporters. "Thousands are looking to us," the executive committee recorded in their minutes with mingled pride and responsibility, "with the expectation that the principles we have adopted, and the example we have set before the world will continue to be held up & they reasonably expect to witness our UNITED ONWARD movements till the conflict shall end in Victory."

For many of the Society's scattered members, the moral reform cause was their only contact with the world outside farm or village—the ADVOCATE perhaps the only newspaper received by the family. A sense of solidarity and of emotional affiliation permeated the correspondence between rural members and the executive committee. Letters and even official reports inevitably began with the salutation, "Sisters," "Dear Sisters" or "Beloved Sisters." Almost every letter and report expressed the deep affection Society members felt for their like-thinking sisters in the cause of moral reform—even if their contact came only through letters and the ADVOCATE....

……

...Society, the ADVOCATE's editors argued, had unjustly confined women to domestic tasks. There were many jobs in society that women could and should be trained to fill. They could perform any light indoor work as well as men. In such positions—as clerks and artisans—they would receive decent wages and consequent self-respect. And this economic emphasis was no arbitrary or inappropriate one, the Society contended. Thousands of women simply had to work; widows, orphaned young women, wives and mothers whose husbands could not work because of illness or intemperance had to support themselves and their children. Unfortunately, they had now to exercise these responsibilities on the pathetically inadequate salaries they received as domestics, washerwomen or seamstresses—crowded, underpaid and physically unpleasant occupations....

……

One of the most controversial aspects of the early woman's rights movement was its criticism of the subservient role of women within the American family, and of the American man's imperious and domineering behavior toward women. Much of the Society's rhetorical onslaught upon the male's lack of sexual accountability served as a screen for a more general—and less socially acceptable—resentment of masculine social preeminence. Occasionally, however, the ADVOCATE expressed such resentment overtly. An editorial in 1838, for example, revealed a deeply felt antagonism toward the power asserted by husbands over their wives and children. "A portion of the inhabitants of this favored land," the Society admonished, "are groaning under a despotism, which seems to be modeled precisely after that of the Autocrat of Russia....We allude to the tyranny exercised in the HOME department, where lordly man, 'clothed with a little brief authority,' rules his trembling subjects with a rod of iron, conscious of entire impunity, and exalting in his fancied superiority." The Society's editorialist continued, perhaps even more bitterly: "Instead of regarding his wife as a help-mate for him, an equal sharer in his joys and sorrows, he looks upon her as a useful article of furniture, which is valuable only for the benefit derived from it, but which may be thrown aside at pleasure."...

....

Many of the needs and attitudes, moreover, expressed by suffragette leaders at the Seneca Falls Convention and in their efforts in the generation following are found decades earlier in the letters of rural women in the ADVOCATE OF MORAL REFORM. Both groups found woman's traditionally passive role intolerable. Both wished to assert female worth and values in a heretofore entirely male world. Both welcomed the creation of a sense of feminine loyalty and sisterhood that could give emotional strength and comfort to women isolated within their homes—whether in a remote farmstead or a Gramercy Park mansion. And it can hardly be assumed that the demand for votes for women was appreciably more radical than a moral absolutism which encouraged women to invade bordellos, befriend harlots and publicly discuss rape, seduction and prostitution.

It is important as well to re-emphasize a more general historical perspective. When the pious women founders of the Moral Reform Society [first] gathered at the Third Free Presbyterian Church, it was fourteen years before the Seneca Falls Convention—which has traditionally been accepted as the beginning of the woman's rights movement in the United States. There simply was no woman's movement in the 1830's. The future leaders were either still adolescents or just becoming dissatisfied with aspects of their role. Women advocates of moral reform were among the very first American women to challenge their completely passive, home-oriented image. They were among the first to travel throughout the country without male chaperones. They published, financed, even set type for their own paper and defied a bitter and long-standing male opposition to their cause. They began, in short, to create a broader, less constricted sense of female identity....

....

II

FOURTH WORLD MANIFESTO

BARBARA BURRIS
Wayne State University

A SPECTRE IS HAUNTING THE LEFT—THE SPECTRE OF FEMINISM

The only real threat to male supremacy is the independent Women's Movement. Therefore the male Left has done a great deal to impede the development of independent Women's Liberation and tried in numerous ways to co-opt the energies of women away from working independently with other women on women's issues. There have been numerous devices used by the

Left to this end depending on the situation and the consciousness of the women involved.

The first tactic in reaction to Women's Liberation was laughter. But that didn't stop some women—in fact it made some of them so furious they left and began "organizing" other women. The next tactic was anger. "You castrating bitches. What do you want anyway?" And that didn't work either—even more women left to join the newly emerging independent Women's Movement.

Then the men began to get really nervous—after all women were leaving the Left in increasing numbers—and the men began to play guilt games. "So what makes YOU think YOU'RE oppressed, you white middle class chick?" (Notice the order of the defining words the male Left uses—"chick" is last.) That tactic made some women even madder but it began to cut deep into many women. And this tactic began to work on some of the less strong women—those who were still full of white male imposed guilt and self-hatred. The Left males realized that they had struck a tender nerve. And they began to manipulate women's guilt and started becoming very liberal towards the Women's Liberation Movement—that is, when they weren't chuckling about those "frustrated bitches" in male only company....

THE MYTH OF THE WHITE MIDDLE CLASS WOMAN

The male Left tries to intimidate Left women from taking a strong and independent stand on the female liberation struggle with the "abusive" statement, "They're only a bunch of white middle class women." It would take a whole other long article to refute this statement but we'll do it in a very cursory manner here.

White is the first defining word of "white middle class women." This implies that the primary position of women in the society is due to white privileges. IF this is so, then ALL whites must have the same privileges, i.e., ALL whites must control the institutions, make the laws, control the army and police, control the government, the religion, education and business and have the very best positions in jobs, etc. But it is white males only who are in positions of power and control in all the institutions of the society. Women are excluded from control and decision-making, are discriminated against in jobs more than any other group, get the lowest pay, are defined as inferiors and as a sexual caste, etc. Also women were the first group to be subjugated as a caste all over the world, thousands of years ago—long before blacks were subjugated to whites in America or anywhere else. Obviously whiteness does not overcome the caste position of being a woman in this society. But the incidental advantages to being white for a woman who is white, but there are also advantages for black males in being males in this society. But the incidental advantages—which are meaningless in terms of woman's true caste position as a sex—come to her mainly in her affiliation with a dominant white male.
and therefore assumes that women share white male privileges. This is false. Being integrated AS SUBORDINATES does not mean that women share the privileges of the ruling caste—white males. Women get the crumbs. In fact, as the Black Liberation struggle found out, there are distinct disadvantages to being "integrated" with your oppressor—especially when he still has all the power. The control over the oppressed is just that much more complete.

The second defining word in the series, "white middle class woman," is middle class. If class defines women before her sex does, then she should be able to compete with any male for any job on an equal level. But this is not the case. Women are almost in a different labor market from men because of the extremely rigid female caste labor role. The discrimination against females in the economy is the most intense of any group. Female labor is the lowest paid. Doesn't everyone know the statistics by now?...[She reviews them in detail—see Caroline Bird, or charts in "The Chart Story."]

A woman's class is almost always determined by the man she is living with. From her father's house to her husband's house—his income determines their class. Her income and job are only "extra." In fact if all women were to be put out of their men's houses and had to depend on their own earning power, almost all of them would be lower or working class—no matter what their class position was before when living with the man. They would be lower or working class because of women's sexual caste position in the economy. Class is therefore basically a destinction between males—while the female is defined by her sexual caste status.

So we have only the last word left in the "taunt" of "white middle class women." And woman—a sexual caste subordinated to the dominant ruling sex, man—is defined primarily by that relationship....

....

As the Female Liberation Movement must cut across all (male imposed) class, race and national lines, any false identification of women with privileges that are really male (such as whiteness or class, etc.) will be fatal to our Movement. Any identification with privileges will destroy the basis of communication which we females share as a suppressed caste and will divide us up as enemies where we should be friends and equals. And the male Right and the male Left movements will manipulate these differences among women to prevent women from overcoming the barriers that keep us apart and therefore unable to effectively change our sexual caste position as females.

Many women do identify with white and class privileges. Our task as women is not, as the male Left does, to write them off as white bourgeois, but to patiently discuss and communicate with women, as sisters, what our true caste position in society is. Once we really understand our suppressed caste status and begin to move to free ourselves from it, we women can then understand other groups' oppression—but not before....

....

Let us suppose, for a moment, that we are in a male Left meeting and they are trying to decide who is "most oppressed"—therefore who deserves their solicitous attentions and rhetoric the most. First of all they decide that blacks are most oppressed. But then someone says, "But black females are more oppressed than black males." Someone else counters that black females in Third World countries are even more oppressed than are black females in the U.S. Then another person realizes that a black female in the Third World who is in the working class and under 18 years old is even MORE oppressed. But the MOST oppressed, and therefore logically and morally the only people they should try to "organize" and work with, are black females in Third World countries, in the working class, under 18 years old, pregnant and culturally defined as ugly.

Such is the "logic" of the "most oppressed." But we can take one last look at it from another angle.

A DRAMATIC MEETING OF TWO OPPRESSED/OPPRESSORS OR "WHO IS MORE GUILTY?"

A black man meets a white woman on the street. He is oppressed because he's black and so need feel no guilt toward her. She feels guilty because she's white. But then the balance shifts as she realizes she's a woman and so oppressed and needn't feel guilt. But then he feels guilty because he's a male. Then she begins to feel guilty because she's middle class. Then he feels free of guilt because he's working class. But he begins to feel guilty because he's older and she's very young and oppressed. She feels oppressed. She feels oppressed as youth and therefore doesn't feel guilty...ad infinitum.

....

We, as women, do not want males to feel guilty. We don't care about guilt—what we want is change. All we demand is justice for our sisters—and that cannot come from a guilt-ridden Movement which has defined half of humanity's freedom as a "side effect" of the "real" revolution which will be made by other "vanguard" "more oppressed" groups.

....

WOMEN: THE FIRST COLONIZED TERRITORY

Let us explain to the "anti-imperialist" women what imperialism and anti-imperialism really is to women.

....

Women, set apart by physical differences between them and men, were the first colonized group. And the territory colonized was and remains our women's bodies.

Our bodies were first turned into property of the males. Men considered female bodies as territory over which they fought for absolute ownership and control. Consider the imperialist implications of the language. He related his sexual conquests; she surrendered to him; he took her; etc. Marriage (exclusive property rights) and the patriarchal family system are colonial institutions created and controlled by males for the subjugation of females.

Our bodies are free territory to other male colonizers when not "protected" by an individual male colonist. What is rape but an imperialist act upon the territory of our bodies.

There are two forms of the colonization of our bodies (territories) by males. Most males have an individual colonial relationship to an individual female and most males identify with and act on the group colonization of women. For instance, rape is an individual male imperialist act against an individual woman while the abortion laws are male group control over their collective female territories. (We realize that we are generalizing here about males and that some of them do not perceive women simply as open territory for conquest. But unfortunately, there are too few males who preceive females as equal human beings to change the generalization much at this point.)

Another example of group colonization of women is the way our bodies are defined as open territory for exploitation (compare the exploitation for sexual satisfaction for the male colonizer to exploitation for raw materials—female bodies are the raw materials). In all forms of the dominant male culture—advertising, pornography, the underground press, literature, art, etc.—female bodies are exploited as territory to demean, subject, control and mock.

The fact that each male petty colonialist has an individual interest in perpetrating the subjection of his individual territory, i.e. woman, makes the colonization of women more complete than that of any other group. The colonial rule is more intense for females as we have no escape into a ghetto and at all times are under the watchful eye of the male colonizers, from father to lover to husband. Therefore our suppression as a group (culture) and as individuals has been more complete as has been our identification with our master's interests (much like the proverbial house nigger).

Fanon shows that it is not enough for the colonizer to control the territory and subject the inhabitants of it to his rule. The colonizer must destroy the culture and self-respect of the colonized. And colonialism's condemnation of the colonized's culture overreaches any national boundaries—for it is the essence of the colonized physical and cultural differences that threaten the colonizer.

……

It is true that women have no recourse other than to rise up in a strong feminist movement to end male domination. We must have our own independent women's movement free from male interference and domination. But we should not lose sight of our ultimate goals. There is a danger that the women's movement will help destroy its own ends if the split between the female and male is made into a new feminist orthodoxy. The women's movement has to be free enough to explore and change the entire range of human relationships and it must be open enough to heal the split between the female and male and draw out the potential of every person. If we want to be free as female human beings we must really be willing to end the split of the human personality that has cut men off from a part of themselves and which has caused untold suffering to women.

(Reprinted from MOVING OUT, vol. 2, no. 1)

CHAPTER FIVE

For him, the world of Theory and the Future . . . For her, of Practice and the Present

Fuller vs. Fuller

"Have you read your great aunt, lately, Becky?"

Where else but in American Studies, or in some similar field of comparative or interdisciplinary general studies, can one become equally well acquainted with two Tom Wolfes, two Winston Churchills, two Thomas Hart Bentons, two Max Webers (one spelled with two "b" s), two Ralph Waldos (Emerson and Ellison), two sets of James Boys (Henry and William, Frank and Jesse), and a handful of families whose members followed different careers and held different opinions from one another—families like the Beechers and the Rockefellers and the Fullers? In the case of Margaret Fuller and her grand-nephew Buckminster, the differences in the orientation of their lives are as great as those that separate the first Thomas Hart Benton from the second—but they share nonetheless the same trait across the generations that the Bentons shared (nonetheless): a zeal for articulate advocacy of the positions they espoused.

A fully-developed comparison of the two Fullers and their philosophies, or even of their views on women in the context of their philosophies, is probably subject enough for a doctoral dissertation or a separate book. No such effort at comparison is being attempted here. Yet from the Transcendental Era to the Space Age, there is a kind of continuity in one strain of the national mood and mind that students of American culture will recognize (to risk a few generalizations to describe the tradition, I would name American optimism plus innocence plus belief in the ability to control one's own destiny plus belief in the future with its Great Promise). In a sense Margaret Fuller and Buckminster Fuller may be seen as "bookends" to the shelf of American literature advancing that tradition. My hope in setting side by side two brief quotations from their respective writings on women is that the cognoscenti will enjoy something like a shock of recognition in discovering that, on this subject as on all others, each speaks with the voice and the point of view and the peculiar sensibility that is unmistakably her/his own.

In a (to me) curious piece called "Goddesses of the Twenty-First Century," appearing in SATURDAY REVIEW (March 2, 1968; pp. 12, 14, 45-46), "Bucky" Fuller acknowledged his great-aunt's crusade for sexual equality during the nineteenth century in the course of outlining what he saw as the destiny of women in the twenty-first. That is, he got around to mentioning Margaret after a Bucky-like overview of the history of past and present as they march toward the technological future that always seems to be rising just over the horizon of whatever landscape he chooses as a subject. One gets the feeling—and I speak as a devotee—that he cannot speak on the subject of women any more than on any other subject without advancing a full-blown theory, nor focus his lenses on specific injustices experienced by very real people in a very real present without wandering from his topic after half a sentence to take in the entire scope of human history. In so doing, of course, he manages to make the suffering and the sufferers disappear from view into the great maw of the Large Perspective. In the article, his great-aunt appears quite briefly as a single fleeting moment (unaware, poor thing, of the Big Picture) in this long historical sweep. Thus, her vision of inequality based on sex was, he implies, based on insufficient evidence—or, at any rate, viewed through too short a telescope, since what she protested was a condition that was itself a movement away from views held in ancient times (when all the deities worshipped were female). This original view of woman, he says, was displaced by a movement of comparatively limited duration, one in which male became dominant over female. But thanks to the capacity human beings have for invention of technology to undermine the need for proving superiority through mere (male) brawn, that period of history is on its way out. I have selected a passage from the article beginning at about this point in his overview of the Large Plot of history.

To select a passage from Margaret Fuller's book, WOMEN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, was less easy; my first inclination was to hunt for a contradiction of her grand-nephew's views, or select some piece in DIAL magazine that polemicized against materialism in a way that anticipated the rationales on behalf of the wonders of technology Buckminster speaks for. I passed this temptation by to include here, instead, a particularly readable and self-explanatory section from her volume, in which she outlines the actual conditions of male tyranny faced by many nineteenth-century American women, women who would not be much impressed by Buckminster's promise of "Pie-in-the-sky" goddess status in the twenty-first century. —B.C.

MARGARET

It may well be an Anti-Slavery party that pleads for Woman, if we consider merely that she does not hold property on equal terms with men; so that, if a husband dies without making a will, the wife, instead of taking at once his place as head of the family, inherits only a part of his fortune, often brought him by herself, as if she were a child, or ward only, not an equal partner.

We will not speak of the innumerable instances in which profligate and idle men live upon the earnings of industrious wives; or if the wives leave them, and take with them the children, to perform the double duty of mother and father, follow from place to place, and threaten to rob them of the children, if deprived of the rights of

BUCKMINSTER

Woman's nature is attractive. She employs tension, playing her male fish, as does a trout angler, on a long, invisibly thin flexible line whose slackening allows the male to play himself out while being gradually reeled in. The male is compressional—a spear-plunging hunter, impelling his missiles as intermittent punches, arrows, or bullets.

Human packs behaved in earliest times as do packs of wolves and herds of deer even today. The males do the widely ranging hunting and fighting. The females, with the young and the decrepit, wander about in a much smaller circle and central area. In a similar manner, throughout our long human history the male has been the widely ranga husband, as they call them, planting themselves in their poor lodgings, frightening them into paying tribute by taking from them the children, running into debt at the expense of these otherwise so overtasked helots.

Such instances count up by scores within my own memory. I have seen the husband who had stained himself by a long course of low vice, till his wife was wearied from her heroic forgiveness, by finding that his treachery made it useless, and that if she would provide bread for herself and her children, she must be separate from his ill fame — I have known this man come to install himself in the chamber of a woman who loathed him, and say she should never take food without his company.

I have known these men steal their children, whom they knew they had no means to maintain, take them into dissolute company, expose them to bodily danger, to frighten the poor woman, to whom, it seems, the fact that she alone had borne the pangs of their birth, and nourished their infancy, does not give an equal right to them. I do believe that this mode of kidnapping—and it is frequent enough in all classes of society—will be by the next age viewed as it is by Heaven now, and that the man who avails himself of the shelter of men's laws to steal from a mother her own children, or arrogate any superior right in them, save that of superior virtue, will bear the stigma he deserves, in common with him who steals grown men from their mother-land, their hopes, and their homes.

I said, we will not speak of this now; yet I *have* spoken, for the subject makes me feel too much. I could give instances that would startle the most vulgar and callous; but I will not....If principles could be essing hunter, fighter, fisherman, bringing back his catch to the woman, where, surrounded by the young and the old, she hovered near the central hearth. Here woman kept the fire going, cooked the meat, and organized the prolongation of the standby usefulness and viability of that which the hunting male brought home.

Women, aided by the many hands of the children and old people, developed many crafts. They organized the home crew to pound the corn, thresh grain, comb wool, and dry the skins, etc. They invented pottery and weaving and discovered how to keep foods by cold storage or by cauterizing them with fire. Women, in fact, invented industrialization by differentiating out and coordinating the multifold regenerative functions and antiseptic tasks and anticipatorily developing the containing baskets, pots, and tools with which to work these items of environment-controlling. Woman, then, is the consolidator of gains. ....

....

....

....

...Women have not, up to now, exercised much of their prime ownership prerogative over American and world industry, but have allowed their lawyers and other trustees to carry on, assuming that coping with the wiles of commerce is as yet exclusively within man's fighting province. Yet woman is now entering the ownership management of commerce and industry to ever more important degree. By the twenty-first century, she will have taken over full management of spaceship Earth.—Buckminster Fuller, "Goddesses of the Twenty-First Century," SATURDAY REVIEW, (March 2, 1968), pp. 45-46.

tablished, particulars would adjust themselves aright. As certain the true destiny of Woman; give her legitimate hopes, and a standard within herself; marriage and all other relations would by degrees be harmonized with these. [Reparagraphed for ease of reading.] — Margaret Fuller, WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1971), pp. 31-33.

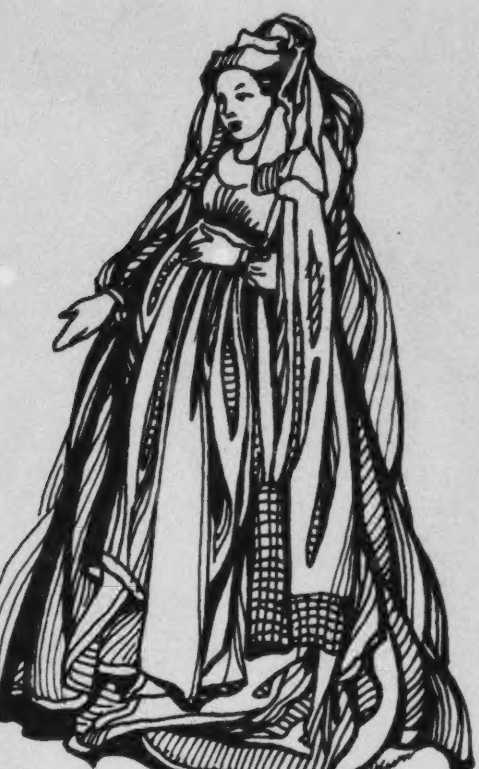


Figure 9. Is This Woman Really Pregnant?

CHAPTER SIX

Stereotypes of Women in American Literature

WILL THE REAL GREAT AMERICAN BITCH STAND UP

JUDITY GUSTAFSON
Department of English
Wayne State University

The Great American Bitch is that anti-heroine of a thousand faces...who emerges in American literature in the post-World War I era and is still very much alive, constantly kicking, in the literary suburbias of Roth, Cheever, Updike, and Herbert Gold....all of those first wives who provide so convenient an excuse for infidelity and divorce in today's domestic novels. She bears little resemblance to Shakespeare's shrew or the familiar "ball and chain" figure, women generally viewed affectionately, and more important, women who are ultimately tameable, their bark being worse than their bite. The bitch is no laughing matter; she is a man-eater.

—Dolores Barracano Schmidt, "The Great American Bitch," AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I, p. 254.

It is not male masochism alone which creates and acclaims images of the castrating bitch; there is a corresponding female sadism which greets such images and collaborates in their fabrication.

Though the long-suffering victim does not disappear from popular women's literature, she is flanked in the mid-twentieth century by a new figure, the lady with the whip....The protagonists of such books are not possessed by their numerous lovers but possess them, use, exhaust, and abandon their men—leave them to defeat or death. "Avatars of the Bitch," Gershom Legman calls such villainous heroines in an indignant pamphlet called LOVE AND DEATH.

—Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL, rev. ed. (New York: Dell, 1970), p. 327.

Bitches seek their identity strictly through themselves and what they do....They are independent cusses and believe they are capable of doing anything they damn well want to. If something gets in their way, well, that's why they become Bitches....

A True Bitch is self-determined, but the term "bitch" is usually applied with less discrimination. It is a popular derogation to put down uppity women that was created by men and adopted by women. Like the term "nigger," "bitch" serves the social function of isolating and discrediting a class of people who do not conform to the socially accepted patterns of behavior.

...A woman should be proud to declare she is a Bitch, because Bitch is Beautiful.

—Joreen, "The Bitch Manifesto," NOTES FROM THE SECOND YEAR (New York: Radical Feminism, 1972), pp. 5-6.

Men can bitch, but only a woman can *be* a bitch—a hard-hearted bitch, conniving bitch, whining bitch, or everybody's favorite, Castrating Bitch. To Dolores Barracano Schmidt goes the credit for providing the label "Great American Bitch" to a prevalent literary type in American literature, but the characterization she outlines is not itself new. The word "bitch" intensified by various adjectives, has become a staple in the vocabulary of those voices of doom who have intermittently issued warnings over the course of the twentieth century that American women, systematically and in cold blood, are intent on devouring their men. The idea behind the term is older still, appearing in oblique attacks on women in the nineteenth century long before the word "bitch" was considered appropriate vernacular for mixed company. In recent years, however, such politeness has disappeared and no comparably insulting term for women—witch, shrew, vixen—has become as popular to use as "bitch." Perhaps that is why Schmidt's term "Great American Bitch" produces instant recognition that a social comment is being made about a cliche. Similarly, "The Bitch Manifesto," the title Joreen selected for her retort to the attack on "independent" women, voices the rage rising in the Women's Liberation Movement as women become conscious of the implications of the language that shapes their attitudes toward themselves. Among some women that rage has produced fierce reactions, while among women generally, the recognition of the power of words to define their "roles" and to direct their lives is growing daily as the women's movement continues to spread.

The reactions among men, meanwhile, are another story. The duly-alerted male can readily side-step an obvious emasculator such as the bitch from W.I.T.C.H. (Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell); but otherwise lacking a set of seven danger signals to warn of her approach, many an American husband claims to have awakened from his honeymoon with the Girl Next Door to discover that she and the Great American Bitch pouring coffee into his morning newspaper are one and the same person. It should not be surprising, therefore, to find the shock experienced by such men reflected in the literature written by American male authors.

It is with such literature alone—with selected female characters, major or minor, in novels and plays by male American authors—that this essay deals. My aim is to examine these female characters in the context of the works in terms of motivation and behavior that may or may not earn for them the title "Great American Bitch." It is *not* my aim at present to deal with the motivations of the male authors in creating the type (although there is, inevitably, some indirect commentary implied) or to attempt to analyze the cultural factors that produced the bitch (or, for that matter, the not-bitch-but-called-bitch-types). Obviously, many other works and authors might be added to the ones examined here for a more comprehensive overview, but even more important, a comparison of types in the literature by male and female authors of the same era and milieu might make possible a more thorough understanding of the social *and* literary conditions which produced the Great American Bitch and the attitudes toward her in different segments of the culture. Before beginning such analysis, it is best to begin by getting to know the type herself. And she is not so easily identified as it may seem.

When I began my own bitch-hunting through American literature, it was under the inspiration of the blood-thirsty quartet of bitches in Ken Kesey's ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST. At that time, I was under the impression that the bitch archetype in American literature must be a common, if not overworked, staple in modern fiction: the bitch was, it seemed to me, simply a distillation of the worst features attributed to American womanhood. My recollections of recent best-sellers, along with critical readings on standard authors, reinforced this impression. However, in a preliminary sampling of authors from Henry James to John Updike, I soon discovered that the boundaries of bitchery are not that easy to distinguish. Expected patterns failed to materialize while patterns I was aware of only dimly forced themselves on my attention. In a few cases, female characters I hadn't suspected became candidates for bitch-hood if their actions were viewed from critical perspectives other than those usually taken; more usually, characters I had always been led to regard as "bitch" types (whether by male professors or critics any oftener than by women, is an important issue but is not my concern here) turned out to be something quite different once their behavior was examined in the context of their lives and particular conditions. An additional set of complexities arose when I realized that the "bitch" type was part of an entire cluster of stereotypes and that all of these were currently in a state of shift, because of changing attitudes toward women among men and women alike. Hence, my confusion leading to the title question of this essay: WILL THE REAL GREAT AMERICAN BITCH PLEASE STAND UP?

To focus the problems of fictional bitchery as I now perceive them, I turn to Dolores Schmidt's observations in "The Great American Bitch," reprinted in AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES I. Schmidt's hypothesis is this:

> The man-eating female in American literature is not the ambitious career woman competing in a man's world, not the unwomanly intellectual whose mind outweighs her heart, nor the unsexed nonwoman, fearful and envious of penis-power. Instead she is always wife and, quite often, mother; she does not work outside the home, except, perhaps, as a volunteer, more sociable than social in impulse; she is educated, but not intellectual; well-informed, but not cultivated; her house is usually clean, orderly, well-run, though she is not a housewife in the sense of one devoted to domesticity. Here, perhaps, is both equation and solution: the woman who is neither career woman nor a hausfrau *equals* the woman without clear-cut identity *equals* the confused, dissatisfied wife *equals* the Great American Bitch.[1]

Echoing Simone de Beauvoir, Schmidt further suggests that a sense of captivity is essential to provoking the bitch's cruelty (p. 901).

The preponderance of bitches in my own survey are indeed wives who turn on their husbands and mothers who dominate their sons. But the types of bitches Schmidt specifically excludes from American fiction are also represented, as are one or two types she doesn't mention. Some of these women are indeed motivated by a hatred of captivity or a desire to attain selfhood. However, ruthless egoism and desire for self-aggrandisement; contempt for male sexuality or lack of it, and fear of "masculine" freedom in the restrictive order of a "feminine" civilization are also depicted as elements in the bitch's brew.

Before going on to specific cases to illustrate these points, I will consider another problem which can be handled at the same time. Dolores Schmidt suggests—and she is not alone in this—that the Great American Bitch was first created by the writers emerging in the 1920s as a projection of their fears and fantasies about the newly-emancipated American woman (p. 901). Blaming all the ills of society on the Great American Bitch thus "reinforces the sexist view:

true happiness is based on True Womanhood, feminine subordination which supports male domination" (p. 904). In LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL (LAD) Leslie Fiedler further proposes that the cultural shock of World War I and the resulting disillusionment with American values are symbolized, in the minds of the male novelists of the period at least, by impotence in the American male and by the social emancipation of the female.[2]

It is my intention to cite evidence which contradicts both Schmidt and Fiedler (who will serve to represent polar opposites in attitudes of scholars toward women in literature), evidence which indicates that neither the Nineteenth Amendment nor post-war blues figures predominantly in the birth of the bitch. First, a bona fide all-American bitch or two was on the literary scene as far back as the late Victorian era. Second, the reputation for bitchery enjoyed by the female creations of the twenties' generation is largely undeserved.

DREISER'S JULIA HURSTWOOD

By virtue of its publication date of 1900, Theodore Dreiser's SISTER CARRIE presents the first Great American Bitch of the twentieth century—Julia Hurstwood. Carrie Meeber enters George Hurstwood's life at a point at which his family-life is held together by little more than "force of habit, by force of conventional opinion."[3] An ample provider in terms of money, Hurstwood spends little time with his family, the resort which he manages being the real center of his life. His wife Julia, on the other hand, devotes her energies to social climbing. As for their relationship, "there was no love lost between them. There was no great feeling of dissatisfaction" (p. 102). Under Carrie's spell of youth, Hurstwood drifts further and further away from his family while his wife, in response to this rejection, grows more indifferent and more independent until she takes over the household as Hurstwood "looked on and paid the bills" (p. 152).

Julia's disposition grows increasingly bitchy, but it is only after she discovers her husband's affair that she attains full-fledged bitch-hood. Her revenge is to execute Hurstwood's complete submission and ruination. Confronting him with his infidelity, she has, Hurstwood senses, "turned upon him, animal like" and "never before had he seen such a cold, steely determination in her eye—such a look of cruel indifference. She seemed a thorough master of her mood—thoroughly confident and determined to wrest all control from him. He felt that all his resources could not defend him" (p. 217). Even as he asserts his position as master of the house, he is beaten—"something was in the woman's cool, cynical, upper-handish manner, as if she were already master..."(p. 218). With much of their property in her name and alimony laws in her favor, Julia holds the winning hand and her final play is to lock Hurstwood out of the house where she now reigns alone and supreme. As a signal of female domination, the closing of this door contributes more perhaps to Hurstwood's eventual destruction than does the closing of the safe door which leads to his immediate fall from grace. Never again does he fully regain control over himself or his life.

JAMES' ISABEL ARCHER

Male suffering at the hands of the female is not the invention of Dreiser, of course, nor of the twentieth century. A look back on earlier fiction reveals many a man to have fallen in the battle of the sexes. However, the principle theme of this war was seduction. To use Leslie Fiedler's distinctions, Fair Maiden and Dark Lady—purity and sexuality—both assailed men's souls through their bodies. The struggle for dominion was fought almost exclusively on moral and physical grounds.

In contrast, the struggle in which the Great American Bitch is engaged, as I perceive it, goes beyond questions of Good and Evil or mere physical conquest; it is a clash between masculine and feminine egos, which if carried to its extreme expression, leads to the total destruction of will and personality in one of the combatants. In the Hurstwoods' case, for example, Dreiser dramatizes Julia's rise to power in the household while leaving her conventional moral victory to the background. Two decades before Dreiser, Henry James also documented a marital battle essentially political in nature but fought beneath a surface of moral concerns. Its heroine as Heiress of All the Ages, an All-American Girl, THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY is also the portrait of an apprentice Great American Bitch.

Isabel Archer begins her European education an innocent abroad. A proud, independent spirit, Isabel is much taken with herself and her own perception of the world—"it may be affirmed without delay," reports the narrator, "that Isabel was probably very liable to the sin of self-esteem...."[4] Although "you could have made her colour, any day in the year, by calling her a rank egoist" (p. 57), no other phrase so succinctly describes her personality. However, hers is the egoism of youth and inexperience rather than a chronic, destructive self-centeredness. A necessary weapon for safe-guarding her ego is Isabel's ready capacity for self-deception. Under circumstances congenial to her well-being, these traits remain harmless enough beside the more attractive aspects of Isabel's character. However, when threatened by the obsessive egoist that is her husband, Isabel becomes a formidable enemy.

As Isabel's personality reveals itself during her initial visit at Gardencourt, the trait which calls attention to itself most often is her desire to remain independent. This is reflected in her belief that marriage is "a ruinous expenditure" (p. 57) and "that a woman ought to be able to live to herself" (p. 56). Nevertheless, "deep in her soul--it was the deepest thing there—lay a belief that if a certain light should dawn she could give herself completely; but this image, on the whole, was too formidable to be attractive" (p. 57). This fear of being overpowered leads Isabel to reject her resolute suitor, Caspar Goodwood, time after time: "Caspar Goodwood expressed for her an energy—and she had already felt it as a power—that was of his very nature....It was a matter of the spirit that sat in his clear-burning eyes like some tireless watcher at a window. She might like it or not, but he insisted, ever, with his whole weight and force..." (p. 112). Viewing Lord Warburton's proposal as a "big bribe," Isabel also refuses him, thus giving what she perceives to be "a sort of personal accent to her independence..." (p. 112).

In light of these refusals, Gilbert Osmond's success in winning Isabel's hand is puzzling. As Ralph Touchett remarks to her, " 'You must have changed immensely. A year ago you valued your liberty beyond everything' " (p. 316). The key to the puzzle is buried in the scene which presents Isabel's meditation before the fireplace. Examining her failing marriage, she blames Osmond for expecting her "to have nothing of her own but her pretty appearance....What he had meant had been the whole thing—her character, the way she felt, the way she judged" (pp. 394-95). If Osmond had deceived her by concealing his egotism under a dazzling exterior which bespoke "his culture, his cleverness,...his good-nature, his facility, his knowledge of life..." (p. 396), Isabel also recognizes her own contribution to the deception through her self-effacement in "pretending there was less of her than there really was" (p. 392).

And if Osmond is incensed because his wife refuses to become part of his collection of precious objects, his complete possession in the old-fashioned way, Isabel is also betrayed in her desire to make Osmond *her* possession. Isabel married despite her distaste for the institution because from Osmond she felt no threat to her independence. In fact, his most appealing point in her fantasy vision of him was that "he was helpless and ineffectual," someone whom she could manage: "She would launch his boat for him, she would be his providence" (p. 393). In her self-deception Isabel euphemistically calls her need for dominance a desire "to do something finely appreciable with her money" (p. 394). Even when she voices her real motives, she doesn't realize the nature of her admission: "The finest—in the sense of being the subtlest—manly organism she had ever known *had become her property,* and the recognition of her having but *to put out her hand and take it* had been originally a sort of act of devotion" (p. 394; emphasis added). As R. P. Blackmur suggests in his introduction to the novel, "the American Princess, whether Isabel Archer or another, always comes to us as innocent as possible, as innocent as the victim who reigns—yet, precisely because of that innocence, predatory to the fingernails upon all who come within her reach" (p. 7).

Well aware of her innocence, Isabel's benefactors had advised against this marriage, ironically providing her one more opportunity to demonstrate her independence by ignoring all judgments but her own. Then too, if her plans to cultivate Osmond proved fruitful, she would have the smug satisfaction of proving everyone else wrong. Now, after several years as Mrs. Osmond, Isabel still insists upon her own judgments, no longer in innocence but through perversely willful ignorance. Capturing the essence of her relationship to her husband, Isabel's conduct during her step-daughter's courtship reveals a Great American Bitch in-the-making. Isabel eagerly assumes the role of match-maker with Lord Warburton in an effort to "play the part of a good wife. She wanted to be that; she wanted to be able to believe sincerely and with proof of it, that she had been that" (p. 383). However, when Isabel discovers the intensity of Osmond's desire for the match, she slowly turns against him. At first she cultivates Warburton's interest, while at the same time giving Rosier a glimmer of hope. Isabel dutifully encourages Pansy to follow Osmond's decision, all the while feeling in herself a hypocritical leaning toward Rosier. Afraid to display a defiance Osmond would label "rank treachery," Isabel nevertheless wishes to hear Pansy confess a lack of interest in her father's choice (p. 430).

Despite lack of tangible proof, Osmond is cruel but correct in accusing Isabel of working against him, and proves correct in his prediction that if Lord Warburton " 'doesn't after all come forward it will be because you've kept him off' " (p. 436). Isabel accidently discovers her weapon against Osmond when she off-handedly remarks, " 'How much you must want to make sure of him' "; both instantly understand the full import of her words: "They made a comparison between Osmond and herself, recalled the fact that she had once held this coveted treasure in her hand and felt herself rich enough to let it fall. A momentary exultation took possession of her—a horrible delight in having wounded him" (p. 436). Hers is a bitch's delight in having exposed his weakness, and this new weapon gives her a bitch's power.

The campaign waged on the field of Pansy's suitors proves a draw, but Ralph Touchett's final illness soon sparks another, greater battle. On the question of Isabel visiting Gardencourt a final time, Osmond expresses the calculated malignancy she considers him capable of. But as she carefully weighs every nuance of word and action during their interview, Isabel ironically reveals her own capacity for calculation. Whether at this stage Isabel is consciously a bitch is a moot point; Osmond takes her for one when he accuses her of using Ralph's dying as a pretext for revenge (p. 492). Later, the tone of a bitch slips in when, in reference to England, Isabel threatens: " 'That's very little; that's nothing. I might do much more' " (p. 494). While Osmond considers a trip to England an act of defiance, Isabel is the partner who interprets it as a rupture of their union; Osmond is clearly startled at this prospect (p. 494).

Certainly a marital quarrel can provoke bitchery in a woman who isn't a chronic bitch. And certainly Isabel is justified in leaving the corrupt environment of Italy and her marriage upon learning how Osmond and Madame Merle have played with her. These actions don't necessarily place Isabel in the category of the Great American Bitch; it is her decision to return to Osmond that marks her for this distinction. After Ralph's death, Isabel is unable to decide about her future. Caspar Goodwood's arrival is the catalyst rousing her to action. Confronted by the formidability of Caspar's passion, she suddenly prefers the "ghastly form" of her marriage. In the "white lightning" of his love, Isabel loses control. Against this "act of possession" her marriage is a constant which she can predict and control. In returning to Osmond, Isabel gains a bitch's advantage on several grounds. First, she can flaunt her moral victory in Osmond's face—she was tempted and had every right to leave but took positive action to preserve the union. Second, Isabel will once again be near Pansy, who in her passivity is a perfect pawn for both partners. Finally, Isabel is now thoroughly aware that her husband is a fortune-hunter, and Isabel will always control the purse-strings. Although Isabel may never achieve the heights of bitchery displayed by some of her twentieth-century sisters, by the time of her second leave-taking from Gardencourt she has revealed a possessive, domineering, egotistical nature which merits at least amateur standing. Lacking the thirst for genital blood which distinguishes recent bitches, Isabel wins in sexual confrontations by retreating—her return to an effete gentleman is Caspar's signal to take his masculine lightning elsewhere.

LOOKING BACKWARD STILL FURTHER

"Oh, Hester, you are a demon. A man *must* be pure, just so that you can seduce him to a fall." Thus spake that blue-eyed darling, D.H. Lawrence, on the heroine of Hawthorne's THE SCARLET LETTER.[22] Leslie Fielder, who will go anybody one better, gleefully proclaims: "It is a final satisfactory touch that a woman be not only the first Faust of classic American Literature, but also the wildest Indian of them all!" (LAD, p. 447). Both men assume that Hester Prynne wants merely to taste forbidden fruit and then drag her fallen Adam down to hell with her. Lawrence thunders: "Hester Prynne is the great nemesis of woman. She is the KNOWING Ligeia risen diabolic from the grave. Having her own back. UNDERSTANDING."[23]

Hester understands, all right. She understands that "the world's law was no law for her mind."[24] She understands that society's values had betrayed her youth to a marriage of convenience with an old, deformed man she could never love. She understands that her act of love was no sin at all, that it "had a consecration of its own" (p. 205), contrary to Lawrence's vision of Hester gloating over her Sin. Hester further understands that her action, together with the social ostracism it incurs, has broken the "links that united her to the rest of human kind..." thus opening to her the awesome freedoms and responsibilities that come with being, at last, a whole, independent individual. No longer does she "measure her ideas of right and wrong by any standard external to herself"

(p. 165). While scrupulously conforming to the external appearance her community expected of her, Hester "assumed a freedom of speculation, then common enough on the other side of the Atlantic, but which our forefathers, had they known it, would have held to be a deadlier crime than that stigmatized by the scarlet letter" (p. 170). A free-thinker and a feminist. Hester might well "have suffered death from the stern tribunals of the period, for attempting to undermine the foundations of the Puritan establishment." Only Pearl's welfare restrains Hester from outright rebellion (p. 171).

"The scarlet letter had not done its office" (p. 172)—it had not broken Hester's spirit, it had not forced her to acknowledge her "feminine frailty" in short, it had not inspired her to repent of being a Great American Bitch. In every positive sense, Hester Prynne is the first and greatest Great American Bitch in our literature. Her one tragic error lay in loving a man too weak and too Puritanical to accept her strength and independence or to choose freedom for himself. During their interview in the forest. Hester admonishes her lover: "Begin all anew? Hast thou exhausted possibility in the failure of this one trial? Not so! The future is yet full of trial and success....Do anything, save to lie down and die! Give up this name of Arthur Dimmesdale, and make thyself another, and a high one, such as thou canst wear without fear and shame." (p. 208) Only when Hester forces him to act does Dimmesdale mount the scafford in broad daylight, but not as much to relieve his burden of guilt as to fulfill his obligation to Hester, thus leaving him free to "lie down and die" rather than join her in her flight to freedom.

Great American Bitch to the end, Hester spends her last years in perfect outward accord with the Puritan community, while holding consciousness-raising sessions in her isolated cottage. Hester could have chosen to stay in Europe, of course; thus her decision to return to America becomes her greatest and final act of freedom as well as her greatest moment of revenge. She will "yes" her Puritan masters to death.

FITZGERALD'S DAISY BUCHANAN & NICOLE DIVER

Returning to the 1920s, the years Schmidt and Fiedler claim produced the bitch, I have chosen to begin my retrospective on the modern bitch with another Heiress of All the Ages. Leslie Fiedler calls Daisy Buchanan of THE GREAT GATSBY "the first notable anti-virgin of our fiction, the prototype of the blasphemous portraits of the Fair Goddess as bitch in which our twentieth-century fiction abounds..." (LAD, p. 311). I disagree. Daisy Fay Buchanan is not a bitch, although she **is** the golden-haired, blue-eyed Dark Lady; she lures men to destruction, not with suggestions of physical delight as did temptresses of old, but with promises of wealth, status, success—the American Dream, that "orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us."[5] Fitzgerald's American Princess is corrupt and weak, and in her passivity things smash around her. Daisy can no more resist the dream Tom Buchanan's offer of marriage puts in her reach than can Gatsby, whose obsession to win Daisy is the embodiment of his obssession with the Horatio Alger myth of success. Gatsby never blames Daisy for deserting him; they both play by the same rules. Daisy, like the other Daisy in the song, cannot be satisfied by eloping on a bicycle built for two, but neither in the long run can Gatsby. Even when Gatsby returns, his fortune made, Daisy has no choice but to refuse his love for the security Tom's patrician class can offer; Tom owns her soul if not her heart. Daisy is neither domineering nor strong-willed nor out for men's blood. In the true genteel tradition she lets the men do the fighting. And fighting in his own corrupt, weak, vicious way, that Great American Bastard Tom Buchanan arranges for a show-down by proxy. Even Nick Carraway, who understands the essence of his cousin's cynical sophistication, never suggests that she is a bitch; he blames both her and Tom most for "their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made..." (pp. 180-81), the ultimate luxury afforded them by their wealth and position.

Similarly, Nicole Diver from TENDER IS THE NIGHT is an American Princess whose dowery of the American Dream leads to her husband's destruction. However, she hardly qualifies as a Great American Bitch just because she outgrows the illness which has held her marriage together. As a young medical student Dick Diver had understood his own limitations: " 'Lucky Dick can't be one of these clever men; he must be less intact, even faintly destroyed. If life won't do it for him, it's not a substitute to get a disease, or a broken heart, or an inferiority complex....The price of his intactness was incompleteness.' "[6] This novel posits dissipation as the American disease, and as Dick reaches beyond his ability, exposing his weaknesses one by one, he loses his charisma and his ticket to the society his marriage has introduced him to. A man of one or two good ideas, Dick professionally over-extends himself at the clinic. Only his wife's money allows him to hold on as long as he does. In his personal relationships Dick's chief attraction is that he wants to be used. For this reason he allows the Warren family to "buy" him for Nicole. In choosing to marry his "Ophelia" he had wanted "to be brave and kind, he had wanted, even more than that, to be loved" (p. 302). To Nicole in her illness Dick provided the support of a doctor and surrogate father; but for Nicole, who wants to absorb herself in a strong male ego like Tommy Barban's, Dick in his own incompleteness cannot provide the type of masculine love she now desires. If marriage to Nicole has ruined Dick, as she says at one point it does, it is only because her money gave him the means to destroy himself faster than he could on his own.

HEMINGWAY'S BRETT ASHLEY, MARGARET MACOMBER & THE DOCTOR'S WIFE

The things Fitzgerald's women represent are poison to Fitzgerald's men, but it is poor criticism to equate the symbol with the individual and to condemn on the principle of guilt by association. Probably the most frequent victim of this kind of criticism is Brett Ashley. Her British origins would prevent her from contending for the title of Great American Bitch—if Hemingway's characterization hadn't already. Brett Ashley is a Dark Lady, a love-goddess born into a world that has made the fulfillment of love impossible. Fiedler's analysis of her function in THE SUN ALSO RISES is a gross example of phallic criticism, a response which Brett seems to encourage among critics. According to this view, Brett is "the bitch-goddess with a boyish bob..., the Lilith of the '20s. No man embraces her without being in some sense castrated;...no man approaches her without *wanting* to be castrated, except for Romero, who thinks naively that she is—or can easily become—a woman" (LAD, p. 318).

Fiedler assumes that her desire for "emancipation from female servitude" is "phallic," that freedom precludes femininity (LAD, p. 318), when in reality her mannish facade is the defense of a woman whose vulnerable point is her femininity. Brett keeps company with homosexuals because with them " 'one can drink in such safety....' "[7] As they drive to the Parc Montsouris Brett reveals a capacity for romantic adoration that would be entirely appropriate to

Hemingway's notably passive females. When Jake asks, "'Don't you love me?' " Brett replies, " 'Love you? I simply turn to jelly when you touch me' " (p. 26). Brett suffers as much emotionally from Jake's impotence as he does himself. Finding physical relief with other men doesn't mitigate the pain of her hopeless love for Jake.

If Brett is the source of pain to other men, it is because they want something she has already given to Jake, not because she deliberately withholds satisfaction as might a bitch. Her fiance Mike accepts the conditions of irony and pity which underscore her romantic nature. He doesn't care about Brett's other affairs as long as the men involved remain impersonal. Robert Cohn has violated the "code" by behaving badly. His rules of romance and chivalry don't function in the post-war wasteland. Brett is not at fault when Mike and Cohn fight, even though she confesses, " 'I've never felt such a bitch' " (p. 245). In their battle of masculine egos Brett is not a combatant but the prize. That Brett is essentially the passive "female" principle is illustrated in the scene where she evokes worship from dancers in the procession at Pamploma. The figures of the Moorish King and Queen are a clue to the paganism which presides over the *riau-riau.* Recognizing Brett as a pagan goddess, the dancers encircle her. Not permitted to dance herself, Brett becomes the image of sexual passivity, a receptacle for love. Hers is the misfortune of being a seductress in an age which produces only cripples. Being a victim of the age herself, Brett is too week to survive the whole, self-contained "masculine" principle represented by Romero. After leaving him, Brett is not gloating over her sacrivice when she declares, " 'You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch' " (p. 245). This does not necessarily indicate that Hemingway has ever taken her for one, even when she insists, " 'I'm not going to be one of these bitches that ruins children' " and again, " 'I won't be one of those bitches' " (p. 243). Thinking of herself as a dangerous, destructive woman in a rationalization which permits Brett to escape from loving too deeply and getting hurt again.

Perhaps the unfairness of Brett Ashley's critical reputation can be more readily seen by measuring her against other Hemingway women who are American and who are bitches. The first Great American Bitch in Hemingway is Nick Adams' mother. The story "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," appearing in IN OUR TIME (1925), is a study in the art of wifely needling. After backing down from a fight with an Indian whom he has hired to cut logs, Doctor Adams returns home unexpectedly, provoking his wife to question him—not once, but again and again—until she exposes his weakness. In "Now I Lay Me" from MEN WITHOUT WOMEN (1927), Nick Adams recalls the time Mrs. Adams burned her husband's treasured Indian relics and then announced with a smile that she had cleaned the basement of all the things that didn't belong there. His mother's self-righteous bitchery, the story implies, is the reason Nick avoids marriage now.

Of Hemingway's bitches, Margaret Macomber is the most blood-thirsty. Throughout "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" Mrs. Macomber mercilesssly rides her husband for his cowardice, taunts him further by sleeping with Wilson, the great white hunter, and ends by shooting Macomber when he displays his newfound manhood. Wilson's comment on these proceedings is that American women are "the hardest in the world; the hardest, the cruelest, the most predatory and the most attractive and their men have softened or gone to pieces nervously as they have hardened."[8] To Wilson every American woman is the Great American Bitch. By Wilson's definition, the wife in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is no bitch even though the dying writer's favorite epithet for her is "rich bitch"; by his own admission he had destroyed his talent himself. In fact, he has been using the woman: "She would have bought him anything he wanted. He knew that. She was a damned nice woman too. He would as soon be in bed with her as any one; rather with her, because she was richer, because she was very pleasant and appreciative and because she never made scenes."[9]

FAULKNER'S CADDY, QUENTIN & TEMPLE

Wilson's definition is a useful guide for sounding out non-Hemingway bitches as well. Jason Compson's section of THE SOUND AND THE FURY begins: "Once a bitch always a bitch, what I say."[10] But neither his sister Caddy nor her daughter Quentin are Great American Bitches. They are victims, not victimizers, to a family of hard, cruel, predatory adults. Theirs is the battle of generation against generation, not sex against sex. Caddy is presented as a young girl whose need to express and to receive love is frustrated by a neurotic mother who lives in the dream of an ante-bellum South where a woman is a lady. In Benjy and Quentin's memories Caddy's love becomes a sanctuary in an otherwise sterile environment. What her family considers to be her sins are Caddy's acts of love in a desperate search for love.

Her daughter Quentin not only inherits the sterility of the past but is born into an even bleaker present. She is every bit the wildcat Jason claims she is for she has hardened in self-defense under his sadistic guardianship. When she robs him of money which is rightfully hers, Quentin unmans Jason in the sense that she has destroyed his hold over her, but her actions are primarily a grotesque parody of the fairy-tale heroine who escapes the wicked stepmother's clutches by running off when the Prince. Delinquency and rebellion are not necessarily related to bitchery. As to Quentin's relationship with the carnival pitchman, the evidence is that he is a con-man who uses her desire for escape as a means to get at her money. Quentin's urgent demands for money imply a price to her elopement. A further indication that Quentin is not a bitch, despite her bitchy temperament, is that she evokes sympathy and protection from Dilsey, the real mother-figure in the Compson family.

The place to look for the Great American Bitch in Faulkner is SANCTUARY. Here Faulkner rips apart the ideal of the Southern Maiden, as Leslie Fieldler has already pointed out (LAD, pp. 321-22). Our first sight of Temple Drake is when she sweeps into a college dance, "her eyes blankly right and left looking, cool, predatory and discreet" as she surveys the males in the gathering.[11] In her career as a virgin, she whores herself by using men for the joy rides, liquor, and excitement they treat her to. Tantalizing them, she witholds herself. After her rape she becomes a devouring bitch in heat. The coolness with which she plays her role during Goodwin's trial, sacrificing an innocent man to her image, is more repulsive than any violence she has provoked in the men. Hers is the bitch's ultimate revenge on the male— if she has been violated, a man has been castrated and burned to death in payment.

WEST'S FAYE GREENER

Ending with another vision of fire, Nathaneal West's THE DAY OF THE LOCUST revolves around another incendiary blonde, Faye Greener. Men fight over her like cocks while she walks away unscathed. Using men to further her movie career, she keeps her love on a strictly cash-and-carry basis. Tod Hackett, who has sold his own artistic talent to Hollywood, makes her the central figure in his picture depicting "The Burning of Los Angeles," the city whose commercialism and corruption grotesquely epitomize the American Dream. Faye Greener embodies the allure of the Dream and it is no surprise to discover that the Great American Bitch and the bitch-goddess success are one and the same person. Again I agree with Fiedler when he suggests Faye "is the dream dreamed by all of America, the dream of a love which is death; and in a strange sense she remains virginal as death is virginal: the immaculate, degraded *anima* of a nation, her realist existence on the screen" (Lad, p. 326).

Thus far, most of the bitches surveyed have been wives; but of these only Isabel Archer is clearly in the type of situation Dolores Schmidt describes as the breeding-ground for bitches. Two others—Mrs. Hurstwood and Mrs. Macomber—eliminate their husbands to save their marriages, or rather, the possessions and positions they have acquired through matrimony. For lack of other evidence, Christian Science seems to be the source of Mrs. Adams' bitchiness. When an author's target is the emancipated female, she is single and sensual. This figure pretty much disappears after World War II except, perhaps, in Mickey Spillane, but the bitch-wife returns with monotonous regularity.

SALINGER'S MURIEL GLASS (and others)

In his early NEW YORKER stories, J. D. Salinger unsubtly suggests that marriage is not particularly conducive to happiness. It seems he would have us believe that Muriel Glass's superficiality and indifference drive her husband to blow his brains out. "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" opens with a detailed description of Muriel preening herself in her hotel room. Mastering the art of applying nail-polish seems to be her biggest concern. Seymour Glass calls his wife Miss Spiritual Tramp of 1948. In contrast, Seymour is deep in honest and, therefore, spiritual conversation with a little girl on the beach. We know she is innocent because Seymour exposes his pale body to her, a gesture he wouldn't make for his wife. When the topic of his wife's whereabouts comes up, Seymour suggests, " 'She may be in any one of a thousand places, at the hair dresser's. Having her hair dyed mink.' "[12] He quickly changes the subject. When he returns to their room, the full significance of the twin beds becomes apparent—it is none other than the spiritual gap in their relationship. Muriel, in an inspired moment of bitchery, sleeps on one bed while Seymour, rather than "die" in her embrace, kills himself on the other.

A similarly insensitive wife is the bane of the narrator in "For Esmé—With Love and Squalor." As revealed in a flashback, a child called Esme provided a haven of sanity for the narrator when he was cracking up during the war. Now he must turn down an invitation to her wedding because his heartless wife, "a breathtakingly levelheaded girl," (p. 87), makes him stay home to receive a visit from his mother-in-law. For a change of pace, Salinger shows husband and wife in open conflict in the story "Teddy." Mr. McArdle tells his son Teddy one thing, only to be contradicted by Mrs. McArdle. When she tells Teddy, "Crush Daddy's bag" (p. 168), we can be sure she doesn't mean the suitcase her son in standing on. In their final exchange, she describes Mr. McArdle's funeral. She will be the woman in red "sitting there in the first row, flirting with the organist..." (p. 169)

When the Glass saga returns in the mid-fifties with RAISE HIGH THE ROOF BEAM, CARPENTERS, Seymour's marriage to Muriel comes into focus as his younger brother Buddy recalls their wedding day. A passage Buddy discovers in Seymour's diary reveals the foundation for later spiritual drift: Muriel, Seymour suggests, " 'feels a mixed maternal and sexual drive in my general direction. But on the whole I don't make her really happy. Oh, God, help me. My one terrible consolation is that my beloved has an undying, basically undeviating love for the institution of marriage itself. She has a primal urge to play house permanently. Her marital goals are so absurd and touching....She wants to shop for curtains. She wants to shop for maternity clothes. She wants to get out of her mother's house, whether she knows it or not....She wants children....I have a feeling, too, that she wants her own Christmas tree ornaments to unbox annually, not her mother's.' "[13] In other words, Muriel wants to be a Happy Housewife Heroine right out of Betty Friedan's chapter in THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE.

In contrast to Muriel's aims, another passage outlines Seymour's own marital goals: " 'I've been reading a miscellany of Vedanta all day. Marriage partners are to serve each other. Elevate, help, teach, strengthen each other, but above all, *serve!*' " (p. 91). Other passages record Muriel's inability to grasp the finer distinctions of Seymour's Zen enlightenment during their courtship, and as the earlier story reveals, marriage hasn't contributed to her spiritual progress. On the other hand, Seymour has not learned to appreciate the fine points of the feminine mystique. In fact, Muriel's faith in marriage has proven his poison rather than his consolation. Or to put it in terms of a Zen koan, was it a perfect day for bananafish when the Zen Master married the Happy Housewife Heroine?

A foreshadowing of Muriel's fate is seen in Buddy's recollection of other female members of the wedding. Although she only appears in hearsay accounts, Muriel's mother presents a striking figure of bitchery as she assassinates Seymour's character. Seymour himself would never censure her, but Buddy, who hasn't attained Zen tolerance, does. Similarly, Buddy offers a scathing portrait of Muriel's Matron of Honor, the braying female who is his nemeis. Buddy has one word to describe this venomous creature—bitch. And that, presumably, tells all.

ALBEE'S MOMMY & MARTHA

In Salinger's world women are bitches when in their narrow-minded, materialistic approach to living, they attack another person's higher instincts. Worse, they are bitches when they fail to give the spiritual support their disillusioned warrior-husbands need upon returning to a world as deplete of values as the one they have just left in the war. Edward Albee also indicts the spiritual quality of American life through the figure of the bitch-wife. Mommy in THE AMERICAN DREAM is the avatar of sterility. Literally sterile, she buys a baby boy whom she subsequently mutilates when he shows interest in his "you-know-what," his sexual identity. Finally and completely rejected as a human being, the "bumble of joy" dies. Life with Mommy has also emasculated Daddy. One of Mommy's milder insults accuses him: "You're turning into jelly; you're indecisive; you're a woman."[14] Daddy's operation only repeats physically what has already occurred psychologically: "Daddy now has tubes where he used to have tracts" (p. 23).

Mommy's idea of a perfect husband is one who sits in a wheelchair all day. She married Daddy in the first place to fulfill her vision of the American Dream. As Grandma explains, her daughter is a gold-digger, "a tramp and a trollop and a trull to boot..." (p. 13). Mommy summarizes her interpretation of the marriage vows: "I have a right to live off you because I married you, and because I used to let you get on top of me and bump your uglies; and I have a right to all your money when you die" (p. 12).

Mommy is a vicious caricature of the bitch-wife-as-parasite. Albee endows his most famous bitch-wife with a little more humanity. Sterility is the central fact of life for Martha in WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? while the central fact of George's existence from her point of view is his inability to rise to the top in the best American traditions of success. But sterility is also a fact in George's life, for the one tangible product of his creative drive—his novel—has been destroyed at birth by his father-in-law's disapproval. Although not entirely destroyed, their love has been progressively eroded by their mutual failures to achieve the American Dream—Motherhood for Martha, a college presidency (or is it the Great American Novel?) for George. In addition, Martha despises George for falling in love with her because she has proven not to be a "complete" woman. When Martha admits at the play's end that she is the one who's afraid of Virginia Woolf, perhaps she is expressing a fear that her own creative impulses, like Virginia Woolf's, will turn in on themselves to the point of self-destruction. While Martha remains the Great American Bitch, she is still putting up a fight against this end.

KOPIT'S HANGIN' MAMMA

An off-Broadway neighbor of Albee's presents a female who does become a mother, with a vengeance. In Arthur Kopit's OH DAD, POOR DAD, MAMMA'S HUNG YOU IN THE CLOSET AND I'M FEELIN' SO SAD an adolescent youth is beset by a domineering mother who is also the spirit of sexual repression. She has locked her husband's balls in the closet (a common expression among men, I am told) long before she followed with the rest of his body. Her son Jonathan has been forced to sublimate his sexual drives in a myriad of hobbies. Of course, his baby-sitter is determined to redirect these drives toward her. Caught between devouring sexuality and devouring maternity, Jonathan finally resolves his Oedipal complex by destroying the temptress and remaining Mamma's boy. Like a growing number of fictional males, he owes it all to Mother, the bitch.

KESEY'S SISTERHOOD OF FOUR

The castrating mother returns in yet another work of the early sixties, Ken Kesey's ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST. The devouring female principle is also well represented in this sisterhood of bitches by the castrating wife. Harding had committed himself to the mental institution because his wife's sexuality has completely unnerved him. Billy Bibbitt, at age thirty-two, is a massive inferiority complex strangling in the apron-strings of his domineering mom. Chief Bromden, the narrator, recalls how his own mother destroyed his father. A white woman, she made him take *her* last name and move into town, all in the name of civilization. Of course, Mrs. Bromden was aided and abetted by the Combine, the mythical "they" who run society, maintaining law and order, conformity and regimentation. Individuality is the greatest threat to the establishment, so the individual must be reduced to an automaton.

Nurse Ratched is the chief enforcer at the institution and her chief target is Randle Patrick McMurphy, the wild Irishman whose determination to keep his *machismo* threatens the entire system. McMurphy sizes up his opposition:

> What she is is a ball-cutter. I've seen a thousand of 'em...people who try to make you weak so they can get you to toe the line, to follow their rules, to live like they want you to. And the best way to do this, to get you to knuckle under, is to weaken you by gettin' you where it hurts the worst....If you're up against a guy who wants to win by making you weaker instead of himself stronger, then watch for his knee, he's gonna go for your vitals. And that's what that old buzzard is doing, going for your vitals.[15]

Kesey may allow his hero a passing utterance against men, but women are the villains of the piece, and penis-envy supplies their drive for power.

Kesey tips his misogynistic hand in his treatment of Big Nurse. She is an ex-army nurse who hides her femininity by strapping herself in tight uniforms. She is a super-mother figure who ironically gains power by denying her breasts and source of nourishment. After all his more subtle attacks fail, McMurphy decides on a more direct strategy—rape. Before he is pulled off her, he has at least succeeded in getting Big Nurse in a prone position and ripping her uniform open to expose her huge mammalian glands. All the Great American Bitch needs to become human is a good screw. At least that's what Kesey's ending implies. Nurse Ratched has broken McMurphy, but not without a loss of power herself. Thereafter, wearing a new uniform flattering to her femininity, Nurse Ratched is no longer the imposing figure of authority she once was.

Whether authoritarian women are the cause of social tyranny or merely its instruments is a question Kesey doesn't resolve. However, he does offer a glimpse of what the world is like when women want to get in men's pants rather than wear them. Candy, the whore from Seattle, lives to please men. Her sexuality nourishes rather than devours, as Billy Bibbitt's initiation into sex illustrates. She builds male egos; ergo, in McMurphy's version of the Christian community, she is saved.

BELLOW'S MADELEINE & RAMONA

The Great American Bitch versus the Whore with the Heart of Gold is a recurring formula in literature of the 60s. Unlikely allies in the war between men and women, both Saul Bellow and Norman Mailer present variations on this pattern. The title character in HERZOG presents a detailed account of his traumatic divorce from his Great American Bitch-wife, Madeleine. Every character in the book agrees that she is a bitch, even the man who cuckolded Herzog. That she has seduced Herzog's best friend is bad enough, but that she has manuevered Herzog into moving him to Chicago with them and sponsoring him among the local dignitaries is a blow too hard for Herzog's ego to endure. For solace he turns to Ramona, that slightly-foreign "priestess of Isis" whose main occupation is building the male ego. By day she is a businesswoman and a graduate student. By night she becomes the teacher initiating Herzog in the subtle delights of Dionysian abandon. She entices him with her voluptuousness, not to devour him but to please him.

In contrast, Madeleine's main ambition, as Herzog reports it, "was to take my place in the learned world. To overcome me. She was reaching her final elevation, as queen of the intellectuals, the castiron bluestocking. And your friend Herzog writhing under this sharp elegant heel."[16] Of course from Madeleine's side of the story, Herzog is merely an unsupportive husband jealous of his wife's accomplishments. He is the one trying to destroy *her* ego: When they were in a room together Herzog " 'seemed to swallow and gulp up all the air and left nothing for her to breathe' "; he " 'was overbearing, infantile, demanding, sardonic, and a psychosomatic bully' " (p. 191). However, Madeleine's plea for identity is muffled by Herzog's screaming protest of his own anguish.

MAILER'S DEBORAH & CHERRY

In Mailer's AN AMERICAN DREAM the Great American Bitch is none other than the Heiress of the Ages—in this tale of men who marry the boss' daughter, she is the price they pay to conquer that other bitch-goddess—Success. B. Oswald Kelly married Leonora for her connections, rose to the top, and discovered once he got there that power is a bore. His daughter Deborah, the other product of his arid marriage, is a bitch sired by the Devil out of the Great American Bitch. Stephen Rojack, another man-on-the-make, marries this second-generation bitch, becoming the target of her ego-deflating tactics: "...she was a real bitch, Deborah, a lioness of the species: unconditional surrender was her only raw meat. A Great Bitch has losses to calculate after all if the gent gets away. For ideally a Great Bitch delivers extermination to any bucko brave enough to take carnal knowledge of her."[17] Finally Rojack does what any red-blooded American would do to protect his vital organs—he murders his wife. Rojack escapes legal punishment, but in the sterility of American life he is not permitted happiness either. Cherry's love offers him a sanctuary he is not strong enough to preserve. In the end, his whore with the heart of gold, formerly Kelly's woman, by the way, also falls victim to Rojack's American nightmare.

UPDIKE'S COUPLES, HERZOG'S COUPLING, AND A COUPLE MORE EXAMPLES

Bitch-baiting doesn't end with Mailer; he is merely more notorious for the practice during this era of American literature than other writers, partly because of his own talent for self-advertisement. Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. Portnoy probably will remain more vivid memories to modern audiences than Mailer's bitches, if only because a surprising number of people, including feminist critics, admit to an inability to read much or at all in Mailer's writing. More revealing as an alternate approach to portraying in literature people of the post-war era is the work of John Updike. The title of his novel, COUPLES, which is set in the heart of suburbia, illustrates the difference in perspective of his approach: distancing itself from the center of conflict, the novel examines *both* partners of a marriage in relation to other couples in the microcosm of a suburban social clique. There are no battles of the sexes of the type I have been describing. And although it is true that the word "bitch" is the husbands' most frequent comment to the wives, usually in reply to some sarcastic remark whose target may be another wife or another husband, the men are just as bitchy in their verbal attacks. Furthermore, the husbands' opinions about their women do not necessarily reflect Updike's own views. That is to say, there are current authors who, unlike Mailer, do not take sides for the men over the women when dissecting the corpses of contemporary marriages. The characters in COUPLES, while not always the most appealing individuals, are neither Great

American Bitches nor Great American Bastards. They are bored, emotionally unfulfilled people who find in spouse-swapping an escape from the dehumanizing, demeaning, Philistine society that America, especially suburban America, seems to Updike and other commentators to have become during this period.

In this sense, Updike's characters, seeking solace from apathy and emptiness by coupling with one another in various new combinations, contrast sharply to the older images of the male seeking sanctuary from his bitch-wife in the Dark Lady, now the whore with the heart of gold whose identity is primarily sexual, whose role in the novel is to solace bruised male egos with the love act, whose men come to her to escape from the competing egos of their wives and mothers. In this literary pattern, the women the men flee from are seen as enforcers of the restrictions and demands society makes *on men*—to be good husbands, good fathers, good sons, good providers, good lovers, etc. While the Great American Bitch represents all the social pressures and responsibilities men face, the Whore with the Heart of Gold operates outside society's sanctions; that is her attraction. With her, the man doesn't even have to be particularly good in bed. Candy, the whore in Kesey's fantasy, finds special pleasure in deflowering Billy Bibbitt, for instance. And in HERZOG, Ramona reassures the hero that he is a very sensual man who has just never learned to be sensual, immediately after Herzog has confessed that he is grateful he can even perform "missionary style."

Without a longer historical perspective, and with the confusion of emotions aroused by the women's movement affecting one's point of view, it is difficult to generalize very far about the fictional fate of the Great American Bitch. David Wilkening, attempting to generalize about portraits of women in current best-sellers, concludes that the image continues to be negative, that the best-selling novelists "are saying women can sometimes be strong, and brave and intelligent, but are more likely to be silly, incompetent, and ignorant." His article in the Detroit FREE PRESS continues: "Women have 'indulgent female grins.' Their conversation is often 'female talk.' Their only area of expertise is in homemaking. And though they give more love than they get, few in their 40s can withstand the objective appraisal of their husbands." Not only do the women exceed the men in giving love, they are also more "hedonistic" and "frivolous" (or equivalent ideas), thus exceeding men also in wanting more sex-.[18] The word "bitch" struck me as being conspicuous by its absence from Wilkening's sketch, perhaps reflecting a tendency of male authors to join female critics in attacking the Feminine Mystique for what it has done to American women during recent decades; the female characters themselves sound remarkably like versions of Betty Friedan's Happy Housewife Heroines and Sexseekers—they are literary embodiments of modern American life.

NOW WILL THE REAL GREAT AMERICAN BITCH PLEASE STAND UP? or, HARRIET NELSON, IS IT REALLY YOU?

One crucial point to consider, by way of conclusion, is that the number of literary bitches who appear after World War II rises in direct proportion to the rise in politicking for the Feminine Mystique, using Friedan's term to designate the congeries of values that promoted the American woman's return to the home. Or to restate the equation, the Great American Bitch emerges to dominate American literature at about the same time that the Happy Housewife Heroine emerges to dominate American family life. The peak period for both appears to be the early 1960s. By 1972, well after Ozzie and Harriet Nelson and sons had presented the fictional family utopia on television during the era defined by the Mystique, David Rabe won a Tony award for his play STICKS AND BONES, a savage attack on the values of mainstream America which, among other targets, exposes Harriet's Happy Housewife Heroine as a truly sinister figure. Of course, after all the Great American Bitches who preceded her in the sixties, this revelation comes as no surprise. Totally committed to promoting the well-being of her family of all-American males, Harriet nevertheless delivers ominous speeches on subjects such as the poisonous effects of aspirin (as she hands Ozzie some tablets). And when David, who has just returned from Vietnam, refuses to continue to accept the familial values of togetherness, Harriet joins with Ozzie and Ricky to persuade this dissenting member of the family to commit suicide, thereby preserving the social unit. Joining the ranks of Albee's, Kopit's and Kesey's Moms, Harriet Nelson proves once again that Mother knows best.

Therein lies an ironic and tragic dimension of the tale behind the literary type on which my quest has focused. Over seven years ago Alice Rossi observed that the post-war era was the first to see motherhood become a full-time occupation for the majority of women at the very moment when technology and education could free them from restrictive roles in the home.[19] The renewed literary attacks on Momism and the re-emergence of the Bitch-wife during this same period appear to be a direct response to the Phenomenon of the Mystique. From a sexist point of view the fiction of bitchery loudly voices the warning that the moment a female gets power in any sphere she will use it on the male, attacking him with positive glee. The villainess in this scenario is not usually the emancipated woman or the unsexed woman, a small portion of the female population, but the wife and mother. These bitches have one thing in common—they refuse to allow their egos to be absorbed by or subordinated to the male egos pitted against them. At bottom, then, the Great American Bitch is always a combatant in a power struggle evolving from her determination to retain an identity separate from the men in her life. As wife she is seen taking over the home and making it *her* castle rather than his in compliance with the Feminine Mystique, pursuing her own ambitions and thereby standing in the way of the male pursuing his ambitions, demanding her own identity and thereby throwing the male into one identity crisis after another as she defies his ego. As a Mom-figure, she tends to go the other way by attempting to absorb the egos of her sons into her own ego (few seem worried about what happens to the daughter's ego).

The Great American Bitch is more than a scapegoat for what the male sees as his loss of status in the home. In the world of the American male, a woman's place, when she is not tending the hearth, is by the side of her men helping them to achieve *their* Great American Dream. It is no accident that two works featuring the most prominent and obvious of bitches, Albee's and Mailer's, are called AMERICAN DREAM. The failure of the American Dream, a theme which has run through American literature at least since the 1920s, is often blamed on the woman's failure to support the man, and most often this woman is none other than the Great American Bitch. *His* dreams have collapsed because she has defied him rather than submissively helping him; or she has devoured him in an insatiatiable sexual or maternal libido, absorbing him into herself, castrating him, causing his loss of "masculinity"—the power to compete and triumph that has conventionally been equated with the qualities of "manhood" necessary for achieving success in America. In his obsession with "masculinity" the American male assumes "femininity" to be his chief enemy.

If the American Dream has failed for American men, it has also proved empty for American women; this is the significance of the Great American Bitch from a feminist point of view. Most of the bitches in this study have no argument with marriage *per se;* for several it is a real means for advancement. Women are taught to look upon marriage and motherhood, as acted out in a comfortable Big House in the Suburbs, as their way of achieving the American Dream. But the dream has a *price attached: in exchange for their freedom from* economic want or spinsterhood, they are expected to wipe out their identities with their names and take up instead the goals of their husbands and children as their own goals. From Isabel Archer and Julia Hurstwood to Mommy and Martha, few Great American Bitches have chosen to leave the home permanently once they have entered it. Whether disillusioned with the dream itself or with the men through whom they sought to attain that dream, most of the bitch-wives and mothers still define their identities in terms of marriage and homelife, thus perpetuating the conditions which produced their bitterness and frustration in the first place. The male creators of these characters offer them few alternatives for breaking out of this vicious circle. Verbal and sexual abuse are two basic weapons in the bitch's battle to exert her independence. Throwing the man out, as do Julia Hurstwood and Madeleine Herzog, is another. Removing the male threat by killing him off is an even more frequent solution. Nowhere in the fiction of bitchery is it suggested that women can retain their own identity without sacrificing the male, or that peaceful coexistence between independent women and men is possible.

THE GREAT AMERICAN BITCH MANIFEST

Although a quotation from THE BITCH MANIFESTO introduces this study, I had not discovered the document until my own writing was almost completed. Arriving by its own route, the MANIFESTO offers three conclusions similar to my own: first, that "Bitches seek their identity strictly through themselves and what they do"; second, that "often they do dominate other people when roles are not available to them which more creatively sublimate their energies and utilize their capabilities"; and, third, that "the mere existence of Bitches negates the idea that a woman's reality must come through her relationship to a man...."[20] I also agree with the MANIFESTO'S observation that "if taken seriously, a Bitch is a threat to the social structures which enslave women and the social values which justify keeping them in their place...." However, I disagree with the conclusion to this statement: "Because she is a threat she is not taken seriously. Instead, she is dismissed as a deviant."[21] The frequent and vivid presentations of the Great American Bitch in literature demonstrates just how seriously the threat she embodies is taken, at least in the minds of the country's male artists. Furthermore, the Great American Bitch is usually presented as the norm rather than as a deviant. Although, as the MANIFESTO proposes, there undoubtedly are women who from childhood have rejected sex roles society expects, the majority of bitches in literature have grown up believing they could achieve the American Dream through their relationship to men. One type of Great American Bitch has learned to use her role as sexual object, wife, or mother to exert her individuality through the social channels most readily available to her, ironically gaining power through roles usually regarded as subordinate positions. The other type of Great American Bitch has not been as successful in manipulating the American Dream to her advantage. Naively believing in the Dream, this type has discovered after marriage or motherhood that she cannot subordinate her own independence to the illusion after all. Unable to find the affirmative outlets for her energy she had expected, she becomes destructive. In the end, her bitchery is a measure of her own sense of failure and of her sense of betrayal as she is ground up in the Great American Dream Machine.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1 Dolores Barracano Schmidt, "The Great American Bitch," COLLEGE ENGLISH, 32 (May, 1971), 901; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

2 Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL, rev. ed. (1966; New York: Dell, 1969), p. 345; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

3 Theodore Dreiser, SISTER CARRIE (New York: Dell, 1959), p. 105; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

4 Henry James, THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY (New York: Dell, 1961), p. 54; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

5 Nathaniel Hawthorne, THE SCARLET LETTER (New York: Washington Square, 1955), p. 170; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

6 F. Scott Fitzgerald, THE GREAT GATSBY (New York: Scribners, 1925, 1953), p. 182; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

7 F. Scott Fitzgerald, TENDER IS THE NIGHT (New York: Scribners, 1933, 1932, 1961, 1962), p. 116; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

8 Ernest Hemingway, THE SUN ALSO RISES (New York: Scribners, 1926, 1954), p. 22; hereafter pages will be cited in text.

9 Ernest Hemingway, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," THE SHORT STORIES OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY (New York: Scribners, 1953), p. 8.

10 Ernest Hemingway, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," STORIES, p. 62.

11 William Faulkner, THE SOUND AND THE FURY (New York: Random House, 1929, 1956), p. 223.

12 William Faulkner, SANCTUARY (New York: Modern Library, 1931, 1958), p. 29.

13 J.D. Salinger, NINE STORIES (New York: Bantam, 1964, 1964), p. 12; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

14 J.D. Salinger, RAISE HIGH THE ROOF BEAM, CARPENTERS (New York: Bantam, 1965), pp. 71-72; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

15 Edward Albee, THREE PLAYS (New York: Dramatist Play Service, 1962), p. 16; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

16 Ken Kesey, ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST (New York: Signet, 1962), p. 57.

17 Saul Bellow, HERZOG (New York: Viking Press, 1964), p. 76; hereafter pages will be cited in the text.

18 Norman Mailer, AN AMERICAN DREAM (New York: Dell, 1965), p. 9.

19 David Wilkening, "How Best Sellers Portary Women," DETROIT FREE PRESS (July 26, 1972), p. 1-C.

20 Alice Rossi, "Equality Between the Sexes: An Immodest Proposal," in THE WOMAN IN AMERICA, Robert Jay Lifton, ed., (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1965), p. 106. An elaboration of Rossi's thesis is presented in this volume in "Even Good Guys Make Mistakes: Answers to Potter," (Part III, Chapter Two), footnote 8.

20 Joreen (Jo Freeman), "The Bitch Manifesto," NOTES FROM THE SECOND YEAR (New York: Radical Feminism, 1972), pp. 5-6.

22 Joreen, p. 6.

23 D.H. Lawrence, STUDIES IN CLASSIC AMERICAN LITERATURE (New York: Viking Press, 1923, 1961), p. 89.

24 Lawrence, p. 89.

A BITCH BY ANY OTHER NAME ...

There are many definitions of a bitch. The most complimentary definition is a female dog...However, everyone agrees that a bitch is always female, dog or otherwise.

It is also generally agreed that a Bitch is aggressive, and therefore unfeminine (ahem)....

1) *Personality.* Bitches are aggressive, assertive, domineering, overbearing, strong-minded, spiteful, hostile, direct, blunt, candid, obnoxious, thick-skinned, hardheaded, vicious, dogmatic, competent, competitive, pushy, loud-mouthed, independent, stubborn, demanding, manipulative, egotistic, driven, achieving, overwhelming, threatening, scary, ambitious, tough, brassy, masculine, boisterous, and turbulent. Among other things. A Bitch occupies a lot of psychological space. You always know she is there. A Bitch takes shit from no one. You may not like her, but you cannot ignore her.

2) *Physical.* Bitches are big, tall, strong, large, loud, brash, harsh, awkward,....They have loud voices and often use them. Bitches are not pretty.

3) *Orientation.* Bitches seek their identity strictly through themselves and what they do....They are independent cusses and believe they are capable of doing anything they damn well want to....Whatever they do, they want an active role and are frequently perceived as domineering. Often they do dominate other people when roles are not available to them which more creatively...utilize their capabilities. More often they are accused of domineering when doing what would be considered natural by a man.

....

. . . people generally feel uncomfortable around bitches. They consider them aberrations. They find their style disturbing. So they create a dumping ground for all whom they deplore as bitchy and call them frustrated women. Frustrated they may be, but the cause is social, not sexual.

....

. . . Bitches refuse to serve, honor or obey anyone. They demand to be fully functioning human beings, not just shadows. They want to be both female and human. This makes them social contradictions. The mere existence of Bitches negates the idea that a woman's reality must come through her relationship to a man and defies the belief that women are perpetual children who must always be under the guidance of another.

Therefore, if taken seriously, a Bitch is a threat to the social structures which enslave women....Because she is a threat she is not taken seriously. Instead, she is dismissed as a deviant....

Bitches are good examples of how women can be strong enough to survive even the rigid, punitive socialization of our society. As young girls it never penetrated their skulls that women were supposed to be inferior to men in any but the mother/helpmate role. They asserted themselves as children and never really internalized the slave style of wheedling and cajolery which is called feminine. Some bitches were oblivious to the usual social pressures and some stubbornly resisted them. Some developed a superficial feminine style and some remained tomboys...

. . . A Bitch has a mind of her own and wants to use it. She wants to raise high, be creative, assume responsibility. She knows she is capable and wants to use her capabilities. This—rather than pleasing the men she works for—is her primary goal.

When she meets the hard brick wall of sex prejudice she is not compliant. She will knock herself out batting her head against the wall because she will not accept her defined role as an auxiliary. Occasionally she crashes her way through....

—From THE BITCH MANIFESTO, by Joreen, "written and revised with the help of several of my sisters, to whom it is dedicated."

CHAPTER SEVEN

Film Stereotypes of American Women

AN OUTLINE OF STAR ROLES, FROM THE THIRTIES TO THE PRESENT

JOSEPH W. BAUNOCH
Wayne State University, with Betty E. Chmaj

I. PILLARS OF VIRTUE
  A. The Sweet Young Thing
  B. The Perfect Wife
  C. The Gracious Lady
  D. Mother/ Mammy/ Mom/ Ma
II. THE GLAMOUR GIRLS
  A. The Femme Fatale
  B. The Sex Goddess
  C. The Showgirl
  D. The Cool Beauty
III. THE EMOTIVE WOMAN
  A. The Long-Suffering Lady
  B. The Vixen
  C. The Sexually-Frustrated Neurotic
IV. THE INDEPENDENT WOMAN
  A. The Career Woman
  B. The Regular Gal
  C. The Durable Dame
  D. The Brassy Modern
  E. The Liberated Modern

1. PILLARS OF VIRTUE

A. The Sweet Young Thing

Perhaps the most enduring of all screen types and as sacred as Mom—to Americans, in the cast of types beloved by movie-goers—a chaste charmer, whether child, waif, girl next door, or Pollyanna...Warm and wholesome, she looks at the world with wide-eyed innocence...The eternal girl-woman and apple-pie symbol of all that is good.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Janet Gaynor (1929-1938: SUNNY SIDE UP; STATE FAIR; ADORABLE; A STAR IS BORN) "Janet Gaynor became the embodiment of all that film-goers held innocent and idyllic about wholesome love. As the eternal waif, she took over where Mary Pickford left off." (Robert Parish)
2. Shirley Temple (1934-1940: LITTLE MISS MARKER; CURLY TOP; REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM; THE LITTLE PRINCESS) "Her innocent and optimistic world of song and dance allowed adults in by the side door....she was little Miss Fix-It whose sunshine existed to solve other people's problems." (John Kobal)
3. June Allyson (1944-1953: TWO GIRLS AND A SAILOR; GOOD NEWS; LITTLE WOMEN; TOO YOUNG TO KISS) The quintessence of Hollywood's dewy-eyed girl next door: wholesomely pretty, ingenuously winning, and perenially true-blue.
4. Doris Day (1948-1969: ROMANCE ON THE HIGH SEAS; YOUNG AT HEART; PILLOW TALK; PLEASE DON'T EAT THE DAISIES) For more than twenty years the steadfast rosy-scrubbed, freckled virgin, ultimately labelled "the all-American middle-aged girl." (by Pauline Kael)
5. Julie Andrews (1964-1969: MARY POPPINS; THE AMERICANIZATION OF EMILY; THE SOUND OF MUSIC) "The perfect, perky schoolgirl, the

adorable tomboy, the gawky colt. Sexless, inhumanly happy, the sparkling maid, a mind as clean and well-brushed as her teeth....the ideal heroine for the best of all possible worlds." (Pauline Kael)

B. The Perfect Wife

Often the elder sister to the Sweet Young Thing (for instance, June Allyson graduates from S.Y.T. of the forties to Perfect Wife of the fifties)....More chic and sophisticated in the thirties and forties than later (when the fifties' films, in the name of "realism"—ironically—took to sentimentalizing the role of wife), she nonetheless remains throughout film history the supportive, enduring, good-humored, comely (though not often overtly sexy—less so, certainly, in later decades) complement to her mate and bastion of the American Home.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Myrna Loy (1934-1952: THE THIN MAN; WIFE VS. SECRETARY; THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES; CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN) "She was seldom in the kitchen or even by the fireside: perfect wife she may have been, but more for exchanging barbed comments in the Oak Room at the Plaza." (David Shipman)
2. June Allyson (1954-1959: THE GLENN MILLER STORY; EXECUTIVE SUITE; WOMAN'S WORLD; THE OPPOSITE SEX) The dewey-eyed girl next door—but now with a husband!
3. Eva Marie Saint (1957-Present: A HATFUL OF RAIN; THE SANDPIPER; THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING, THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING) Less glamorized and/or sentimentalized than her predecessors, but as complete a complement to her spouse.

C. The Gracious Lady

Although she shared many of the attributes of the Perfect Wife, she was something more: the focal point of her dramas rather than a supporting peg....Virtuous, compassionate, intelligent, witty, and, in her own elegantly genteel way, always able to face whatever crisis confronted her...could be strong and independent—freely giving of her strength to sustain her man, without loss of dignity.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Irene Dunne (1930-1952: ROBERTA; MY FAVORITE WIFE; ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM; LADY IN A JAM) "Irene Dunne's forte was indestructable dignity....she was invincibly ladylike—it is hardly a coincidence that Deborah Kerr inherited two of her old parts." (David Shipman)
2. Greer Garson (1939-1955: BLOSSOMS IN THE DUST; MRS. MINIVER; MADAME CURIE; THAT FORSYTH WOMAN) "The stiff upper lip in a never-never Albion....radiantly genteel....Hers were the 'nice,' safe films in which middle-aged women could find solace, a sense that, amid restrictions and shopping queues and the long wait for letters from the fronts, Life after all could be Beautiful." (Charles Higham and Joel Greenberg)
3. Deborah Kerr (1947-Present: THE KING AND I; TEA AND SYMPATHY; HEAVEN KNOWS, MR. ALLISON; THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA) Ladylike, serene, and as she herself has described her own screen image, highminded...white-gloved and decorative.

D. Mother/Mammy/Mom/Ma

Aproned, over-forty, and beyond sex...another bastion of the American Home; usually bolstering from the background...the quintessence of strength, constancy, approachability, and integrity who would sacrifice all for the family...not until the fifties and sixties does this tower of selflessness give way in film to the "Great American Bitch" (i.e. Angela Lansbury) moms who blight instead of brace.[2]

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Fay Bainter (1934-1953: JEZEBEL; MOTHER CAREY'S CHICKENS; YES, MY DARLING DAUGHTER; OUR TOWN) "...a warmhearted wife and mother in most of her thirty-nine movies." (NEWSWEEK) "For more than twenty-five years she played aunt, mother, and grandmother to most of filmdom's top stars." (TIME)
2. Hattie McDaniel (1932-1948: CAN THIS BE DIXIE?; GONE WITH THE WIND; MARYLAND; SONG OF THE SOUTH) [cf. Ethel Waters' roles as another example—BC] "...ever loyal, ever scolding Mammy..." (David Zinman) "...the faithful servant..." (Bosley Crowther) "...the immense presence..." (Leslie Halliwell)
3. Jane Darwell (1930-1956: BRIGHT EYES; THE GRAPES OF WRATH; SUNDAY DINNER FOR A SOLDIER; THE DAUGHTER OF ROSIE O'GRADY) "...in more than 300 Hollywood films, a strong-featured Missourian who over the years played mother...grandmother..and whatever home-and-hearth character the plot demanded, most notably Ma Joad in THE GRAPES OF WRATH." (TIME) "...strength and homely beauty..." (Otis Ferguson)

II. THE GLAMOUR GIRLS

A. The Femme Fatale

Dietrich, as a *femme* at her most *fatale* in THE DEVIL IS A WOMAN, tells the hero, "I came to see if you were dead. If you loved me enough, you would have killed yourself"...Although most film *fatales,* including Dietrich herself, aren't usually such lethal witches, even the most Americanized carries a hint of destructiveness...A woman of mystery and allure, she is the exotic conquerer of the submissive male in a world of romance, intrigue, and shadows.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Marlene Dietrich (1930-1957: MOROCCO; BLOND VENUS; THE DEVIL IS A WOMAN; A FOREIGN AFFAIR) "Marlene Dietrich!...Your name, at first the sound of a caress, becomes the crack of a whip. When you wear feathers, and furs, and plumes, you wear them as though they belong to your body. In your voice we hear the voice of the Lorelei; in your look, the Lorelei turns to us." (Jean Cocteau) "Marlene Dietrich, who embodied the cruel woman of those fantasies [of post-World War I Germany's male masochism], soon emigrated to the United States which appreciated even more than Germany the delicious threat of her million-dollar legs." (Leslie Fiedler)
2. Rita Hayworth (1941-1957: GILDA; THE LOVES OF CARMEN; SALOME; MISS SADIE THOMPSON; COVER GIRL) "The appelation 'The Love Goddess' has been used...mostly about Rita Hayworth....the woman on the seducing end....provocation was her specialty." (David Shipman)
3. Hedy Lamarr (1938-1957: ALGIERS; LADY OF THE TROPICS; WHITE CARGO; STRANGE WOMAN; DISHONORED LADY; SAMSON AND DELILAH; THE FEMALE ANIMAL) "...she was considered the most beautiful woman in films at the time"; After ALGIERS (1938), as a "beauty for one last glimpse of who Charles Boyer leaves the Casbah...her name became synonymous with glamour"; in LADY OF THE TROPICS (1939), she is "a half-caste"; in WHITE CARGO (1942), Tondelaye, "A half-caste jumble temptress"; in both [STRANGE WOMAN (1946) and DISHONORED LADY (1947)]

she was a *femme fatale*"; "in SAMSON AND DELILAH (1950)...audiences...would be tempted to see her as the world's most famous temptress" (Shipman) "Of all the ladies with sleep in their eyes,...Heddy Lamarr is the simplest. Miss Lamarr doesn't have to say 'Yes,' all she has to do is yawn." (Parker Tyler)

4. Ava Gardner (1946-1964: THE KILLERS; PANDORA AND THE FLYING DUTCHMAN; THE BAREFOOT CONTESSA; THE SUN ALSO RISES) A "love-idol...with a dash of vampirism" (Edgar Morin) "...Ava Gardner, whose feline face, passion-suggesting voice and existential air, enable her to typify a sex-image that post-World War II audiences in all parts of the world have recognized as a bona fide facet of our times." (Mal Vincent)

B. The Sex Goddess

Another temptress, but open rather than mysterious, straightforward rather than devious, brassy rather than sinister....Her guise is whorish, but her heart is often as generous as her proportions....By the forties the brassiness gives way to cuddliness and by the sixties (as a reflection of an alienated, automated age?) it sometimes descends to a zombie-like, plastic super-womanishness.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Mae West (1932-40): SHE DONE HIM WRONG; I'M NO ANGEL; BELLE OF THE NINETIES; MY LITTLE CHICKADEE) "She was the good-natured and abundant sexual-symbol of the Depression generation, a buxom Joan of Arc leading the fight to waive the old conception of sex as a state of sin." (John Kobal)
2. Jean Harlow (1930-1937: PLATINUM BLONDE; RED DUST; BOMBSHELL; RIFFRAFF) "Like Mae, Jean was funny....Both West and Harlow let a certain middle-class decency (allied with basic chastity) simple go by the board. Both gloried in being, at least potentially, unchaste." (Parker Tyler)
3. Lana Turner (1941-1955: ZIEGFELD GIRL; SLIGHTLY DANGEROUS; HONKY TONK; THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL) "Miss Turner plays with the dignity and the sense of high destiny you might expect of a heroine walking down the runway of Minsky's burlesque." (Bosley Crowther)
4. Marilyn Monroe (1950-1962: GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES; THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH; BUS STOP; SOME LIKE IT HOT) "There was something genuine about her, and really pathetic, as if she were all too human to exercise the great craft of queening it for the tradition....Maybe she was the last 'goddess' actually seeming to be made out of flesh rather than foamrubber: something to sleep *with,* not *on.*" (Parker Tyler)
5. Raquel Welch (1966-Present: FANTASTIC VOYAGE; THE BIGGEST BUNDLE OF THEM ALL; THE LADY IN CEMENT; MYRA BRECKINRIDGE) "Unlike her predecessors, who evolved alternating images as brassy comediennes with hearts of gold, graceful dancers, tough dames smoldering with sensuality, or basically good-natured dumb blondes, Raquel's screen personality has not homogenized into any definite image—beyond her body." (James Robert Parish)

C. The Showgirl

The Sweet Young Thing with spangles....Although glamorized and greasepainted, she is essentially a "good kid": affable, wholesome, reliable, with "the-show-must-go-on" in her blood....Curiously, a less overtly theatrical personage than many of her performing sisters, she often experiences a metamorphosis: from chorus kicker or cheap honky tonk singer or the prettier half of a song-and-dance team into Lady and Star at the film's end. When backstage musicals fade in the fifties, she fades with them.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Ruby Keeler (1933-1937: FORTY-SECOND STREET; FOOTLIGHT PARADE; GO INTO YOUR DANCE; READY, WILLING AND ABLE) "You've got to go on and give and give....you're going on a youngster, but you've got to come back a star!" (Warner Baxter to Ruby Keeler in 42ND STREET)
2. Alice Faye (1936-1943: ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND; ROSE OF WASHINGTON SQUARE; LILLIAN RUSSELL; HELLO, FRISCO, HELLO) "She was blonde, cuddly, shapely and kind....When men crossed her, she didn't start throwing things (as Grable did later) but quietly left the room, her eyes welling with tears. She smiled a lot. Men in particular adored her....hers is the supreme example of an amiable temperament caught by the camera." (Shipman)
3. Betty Grable (1940-1955: CONEY ISLAND; SWEET ROSIE O'GRADY; THE DOLLY SISTERS; MOTHER WORE TIGHTS) "Receipts and exhibitor polls agree she was top box-office for nine straight years! Her success secret was quite simple: look like the hottest floozy in town but really turn out to be the good-natured girl next door waiting for the right guy to come along." (Gene Ringgold)
4. Judy Garland (1940-1954: BABES ON BROADWAY; PRESENTING LILY MARS; EASTER PARADE; A STAR IS BORN) "Nervous tension had already become a hypnotic part of Garland's acting, charging even the most superficial of her roles with an urgency that broke across and gripped her audience. But never before or again was it so beautifully controlled...The pathos she has always possessed, is here deeper and truer." (John Kobal re: A STAR IS BORN)

D. The Cool Beauty

The "white" lady, the goddess on a pedestal: aristocratic, imperturbably, and impeccably groomed....Often an heiress or a princess, she draws respectfully smitten glances rather than leering appraisals from men....Copulation with such a creature, if at all imaginable, could cause frostbite....After the fifties, the Cool Beauty, too, disappears.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Constance Bennett (1929-1939: RICH PEOPLE; OUR BETTERS; AFFAIRS OF CELLINI; TOPPER) "Fans raved over her elegance, her perfect manners, her personality. Her voice was intriguing to a degree. It was the last word in sophistication." (Picturegoer)
2. Gene Tierney (1940-1955: LAURA; LEAVE HER TO HEAVEN; DRAGONWYCK; THE RAZOR'S EDGE) "No amount of strenuous plot trouble seems to jar Gene Tierney's smooth deadpan. Waking or sleeping, in ecstasy or anger, joy or sorrow, her pretty, composed features seem to be asking the single, gamin-and-spinach question 'Huh?' " (James Agee)
3. Alexis Smith (1940-1959: STEEL AGAINST THE SKY; THE HORN BLOWS AT MIDNIGHT; THE TWO MRS. CARROLLS; THE WOMAN IN WHITE) "...the director would yell 'action' and I'd raise my eyebrows and act—it was another of those superficial, so-called sophisticated parts that were fun to do at first, dressing up to kill, etc., but after a while, ugh!" (Smith on Smith)
4. Grace Kelly (1951-1956: HIGH NOON; THE COUNTRY GIRL; THE SWAN; HIGH SOCIETY) "A frosty society belle who gets thawed out....Miss Kelly will amaze her fans in a scene in which she lets down her hair and kicks up her heels after dipping into the champagne..." (Al Weitschat re: HIGH SOCIETY)

III. THE EMOTIVE WOMAN

A. The Long-Suffering Lady

The noble martyr who tearfully but courageously suffers the slings and arrows....Her agonizing is usually the result of the abusiveness and/or infidelities and/or weaknesses of a man (or men); on other occasions her antagonist might be a thankless child, malicious gossip, or disease (physical or mental)....Popular with feminine audiences, she "complies with woman's image of herself as long-suffering." (Leslie A. Fiedler)...Interestingly and paradoxically, many stars who made the type a specialty were equally adept at portraying her emotive opposite, the Vixen.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Greta Garbo (1930-1937: ANNA CHRISTIE; ROMANCE; ANNA KARENINA; CAMILLE) "Garbo incarnates 'the beauty of suffering'....It is the suffering of solitude...She transcends the *femme fatale* by her beauty of soul." (Edgar Morin)
2. Bette Davis (1937-1964: DARK VICTORY; NOW VOYAGER; THE CORN IS GREEN; DECEPTION) "With the hounds of fate baying at her heals, [her] progress through [a] film is pretty much of a nip-and-tuck affair, with [Bette] getting most of the nips." (Frank S. Nugent)
3. Joan Crawford (1945-1962: MILDRED PIERCE; POSSESSED; SUDDEN FEAR; AUTUMN LEAVES) "Depending on the whim of her scriptwriters, she defended her honor or gave it away, and generally suffered the vicissitudes of the damned....the agony of the guilty and/or lonely." (David Shipman)
4. Barbara Stanwyck, Susan Hayward, others (1940s ff.): STELLA DALLAS; ALWAYS GOODBYE; SORRY, WRONG NUMBER; THE LADY GAMBLES (Stanwyck); SMASH-UP, THE STORY OF A WOMAN; I'LL CRY TOMORROW; I WANT TO LIVE; BACK STREET (Hayward) "As for most of the women stars of the time, how they suffered! Such problems they had! Susan Hayward battled alcohoism and rival female Marsha Hunt in SMASH-UP (1947). For Olivia de Havilland, it was touch and go against insanity in the exploitative THE SNAKE PIT (1948)....1947's HUMORESQUE drove rich-and-spoiled Crawford to drink and suicide." (Marjorie Rosen) (For comment on Stanwyck and Hayward, see under Vixen, below.)
5. Katharine Hepburn (1951-Present: SUMMERTIME; LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT; THE LION IN WINTER; THE TROJAN WOMEN) "The aging virgin, an innocent abroad....Prim and gaunt, withering in her loneliness, she is the female Yankee, the archetype of a Henry James heroine grown old." (Pauline Kael re: SUMMERTIME)

B. The Vixen

Overpowering and destructive, a more lethal antagonist than the *femme fatale;* the neurotic, vindictive, castrating bitch-woman.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Bette Davis (1934-Present: OF HUMAN BONDAGE; JEZEBEL; IN THIS, OUR LIFE; BEYOND THE FOREST) "Bette Davis demonstrates the horrors of egocentricity on a marathonic scale." (James Agee) "I think Miss Davis would have been burned as a witch two or three hundred years ago." (E. Arnat Robertson)
2. Joan Crawford (1931-1967: RAIN; THE WOMEN; HARRIET CRAIG; QUEEN BEE) "Mesmerizing...stalking her way through the jungle of cliches like a tigress....the working girl from the wrong side of the tracks, clawing her way to the top." (David Shipman)

3. Barbara Stanwyck (1930-1956: BABY FACE; DOUBLE INDEMNITY; THE STRANGE LOVE OF MARTHA IVERS; CLASH BY NIGHT) "With Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, she makes a Hollywood triumvirate of 'strong' women. Like them, in a couple of films she was menaced, the frightened heroine, but it was unlikely casting. She was in her element running the show, directing the traffic." (David Shipman) "Her detractors regard her as a kind of latter day Lilith." (Gene Ringgold)
4. Susan Hayward (1942-1961: THE HAIRY APE; I CAN GET IT FOR YOU WHOLESALE; DAVID AND BATHSHEBA; ADA) "Susan Hayward has been labeled a bargain-basement Bette Davis....[but she has developed] a Hayward image that is distinctly her own: staccato walk, bouncing red hair, firmly set jaw....Said her first agent: 'She's smart—but cold as a polar bear's foot.' " (Robert Osborne)
5. (Late) Elizabeth Taylor (1963-Present: WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?; THE TAMING OF THE SHREW; CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF; X, Y and ZEE) "She has grown into the raucous-demanding-woman....She wears her hair like upholstery, to balance the upholstery of flesh. The weight she has put on these last years has not made her gracefully voluptuous; she's too hard-boiled to be Rubenesque. The weight seems to have brought out this coarseness, and now she basks in vulgarity....Elizabeth Taylor has changed before our eyes from the fragile child with a woman's face to the fabled beauty to this great bawd." (Pauline Kael)

C. The Sexually-Frustrated Neurotic[3]

The perennial outsider, the misfit, the unfulfilled woman, whose lonely, empty life is vitalized almost solely by her own hysterical outbursts.
REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Miriam Hopkins (1936-1943: THESE THREE; THE OLD MAID; A GENTLEMAN AFTER DARK; OLD ACQUAINTANCE) "...most of the time neither her hostessy graciousness nor cracked ice delivery varied much...tertiary or worse in terms of audience sympathy....in 1940 the 'Harvard Lampoon' cited her 'the least desirable companion on a desert island.' " (Shipman)
2. Agnes Moorhead (1942-1960: THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS; SINCE YOU WENT AWAY; DARK PASSAGE; FOURTEEN HOURS) "...on the screen Agnes Moorehead has depicted...many of the vinegary aspects of the female psyche....Moorehead's portrayal of feminine neuroticisms in THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS...more or less determined the kind of film roles she was to obtain thereafter." (Ronald L. Bowers) "...prying, vicious...definitive portrait of bitchery...[in DARK PASSAGE]" (Charles Higham and Joel Greenberg)
3. OTHERS—Mercedes McCambridge in ALL THE KING'S MEN, Rosalind Russell in PICNIC, Geraldine Page in SUMMER AND SMOKE, individual roles by Ingrid Bergman, Bette Davis, Shelley Winters, others.[4]

IV THE INDEPENDENT WOMAN (AT TIMES, THE "NEW WOMAN" OR THE "MODERN WOMAN")

A. The Career Girl

Ambitious and productive, tailored and crisp; triumphant in a dismayed man's world (until her final-reel conversion into a lovestruck, "fulfilled" female). The Career Girl as a star type, along with most of her Modern Woman sisters, all but disappears after the forties.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Jean Arthur (1935-1948: MORE THAN A SECRETARY; MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN; MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON; THE MORE THE MERRIER) "The mood of the depression required stars who were tough, resilient, and supremely capable....[Such women as Jean Arthur] were men's equal, but they regarded the world with less illusion....she was Miss Average American, usually a shop girl or secretary, with blonde good looks and a ready smile; and above all, perhaps, a fetching husky voice, childishly querulous at one moment, deeply reassuring the next." (David Shipman)
2. Katharine Hepburn (1933-1952: CHRISTOPHER STRONG; A WOMAN REBELS; MORNING GLORY; WOMAN OF THE YEAR; ADAM'S RIB; PAT AND MIKE) "Hepburn rarely played a woman with a child; she was almost invariably the modern woman, the career girl, the bachelor girl." (Pauline Kael)...Kenneth Tynan once termed her "the Garbo of the Great Outdoors."...by the time CHRISTOPHER STRONG (1933) was shown...she played, with the same burning conviction, a celebrated British aviatrix. the sort of resolute part she was to play so often." (Shipman) "...the beginning of an on-screen partnership [with Spencer Tracy, ten films in all] which well may be the most rewarding in all film history....This first one set the pattern: WOMAN OF THE YEAR (1942) [in which] they were journalists of opposing interests on the brink of divorce. She was eager, 'intellectual,' idealistic....Then there were...ADAM'S RIB (1949), about husband-and-wife lawyers who find themselves on opposing sides in a serio-comic attempted murder case....[and] PAT AND MIKE (1952): she was an all-around athlete and Tracy her trainer." (David Shipman)
3. Claudette Colbert (1939-1946: IMITATION OF LIFE; SHE MARRIED HER BOSS; SO PROUDLY WE HAIL; NO TIME FOR LOVE) "...she delivered dialogue with an air that convinced men she was the kind of woman who would give them an even break, and convinced women that giving men that illusion is as easy in real life as Colbert made it seem on the screen....the image of carefree capability Miss Colbert projected was exactly what men and women, the world over, needed in the particular years she was a star." (Joseph P. Pacheco, Jr.)
4. Rosalind Russell (1940-1952: HIS GIRL FRIDAY; MY SISTER EILEEN: WHAT A WOMAN!; TAKE A LETTER, DARLING; A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION) "I played—I think it was twenty-three career women. I've been every kind of executive and I've owned everything—factories and advertising agencies and pharmaceutical houses. Except for different leading men and a switch in title and pompadour, they were all stamped out of the same Alice-in-Careerland [mold]. The script always called for a leading lady somewhere in her thirties, tall brittle, not too sexy. My wardrobe had a set pattern: a tan suit, a grey suit, a biege suit, and then a negligee for the seventh reel, near the end, when I would admit to my best friend on the telephone that what I really wanted was to become a dear little housewife." (Russell on Russell)

B. The Regular Gal

Earthbound and salty, another female who holds her own in the male world but men like her better; the wise-cracking "good Joe," comfortable "pal," or "buddy." [Note the masculine terms used to describe her, assumed to be complimentary.—BC]

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Joan Blondell (1930-1956: GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933; HE WAS HER MAN;

LADY FOR A NIGHT; A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN) "I was forever doing the same part—just a change of clothes. I'd try to vary the tempo, but...I was forever playing those brash extrovert characters." (Blondell on Blondell)

2. Ginger Rogers (1930-1950: STAGE DOOR; LUCKY PARTNERS; ROXIE HART; TENDER COMRADE) "Always best when playing a gum-chewing chorus girl or a snappy, down-to-earth character, she began to lose her top-star footing only when she embarked on a series of roles as elegant, sophisticated ladies." (Robert Osborne)
3. OTHERS: Anne Sheridan to Patricia Neal; Eve Arden as supporting actress in the type.

C. *The Durable Dame*[5]

Behind her battleaxe exterior beat the proverbial heart of gold (or, in recent caricatures of the type, as with Bette Davis, a "one hundred percent camp" malignancy)...a lovable, earthy old rock, too tough to be a relic and too honest for the prescribed niceties...she weathers the world, one way or another, and only death can demolish her.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Marie Dressler (1930-1933: ANNA CHRISTIE; MIN AND BILL; TUGBOAT ANNIE; DINNER AT EIGHT) "In 1933...the biggest draw in films. She wasn't young or glamorous—a Garbo or a Shearer or a Gaynor—but an aging, ugly and bulky lady whose specialty was low-life drunks....It was once said that she was the heart of America...the pessimistic and worldly-wise Dressler." (David Shipman)
2. Marjorie Main (1937-1957: JACKASS MAIL; FEUDIN', FUSSIN' AND A-FIGHTIN'; MA AND PA KETTLE; FRIENDLY PERSUASION) "...a cultural illiterate bravely, but neither efficiently or effectively, coping with a world she never made....but beneath the surface vulgarity...something of that inextinguishable valor which enables the human race to confront, and sometimes to surmount, the exigencies and malevolences of an inexplicable society and universe." (W. Franklyn Moshier)
3. Bette Davis (1961-Present: POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES; WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?; HUSH, HUSH SWEET CHARLOTTE; THE NANNY) "Exuberantly uncorseted, her torso looks like a gunnysack full of galoshes. Coarsely cosmeticked, her face looks like a U-2 photograph of Utah. And her acting, as always, isn't really acting; it's shameless showing-off. But just try to look away." (TIME)

D. *The Brassy Modern*

As brash as the regular gal but bouncier and move volatile; a bombshell—likeable, rambunctious and non-stop in her quest, whether for a man or anything else...comes on strong but makes them laugh.

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Ethel Merman (1934-1953: ANYTHING GOES; STRIKE ME PINK; ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND; CALL ME MADAM) The Brassy Modern at her brassiest and noisiest—and most winning. She came on with the force of a steam calliope and if she didn't always win the hero, she usually settled ungrudgingly for second best.
2. Betty Hutton (1942-1952: HAPPY GO LUCKY; THE MIRACLE OF MORGAN'S CREEK; INCENDIARY BLONDE; ANNIE GET YOUR GUN) "The 'Blond Bombshell'...the image of the frantic but good-natured screwball....usually in pursuit of a pathetic Eddie Bracken." (John Kobal)

3. Barbra Streisand (1968-Present: FUNNY GIRL; ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE FOREVER; THE OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT) "The 'new Ethel Merman.'...She pulls all the stops out, at times to overwhelming impact....all the velocity and force of a demolition squad." (John Kobal) "She is as unique as Garbo...and as common as a corned-beef sandwich. She is as brash and bitchy as a gun moll...." (MOVIE DIGEST)[6]

E. The Liberated Modern

The newest of the types, good-looking in her own way, she began to bloom in the mid-sixties. "Liberated" in any of several ways, she may be promiscuous, a "career woman" of a newer kind (whether as teacher, model, tramp), or just "free" in a new way (free of stereotypes, for instance). Unlike most of her American-Dreaming sisters, she sets her life goals beyond the hope of husband-and-home-in-the-suburbs....usually self-reliant, razor-sharp, hiply alienated, and tough but pretty. [ED. NOTE: Since Fonda's KLUTE won her an Oscar, look for more variations, imitations, and caricatures of the "libbie" type in the coming years.—BC]

REPRESENTATIVE STARS:

1. Jane Fonda (1965-Present: CAT BALLOU; THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?; KLUTE) "Jane Fonda's motor runs a little fast. As an actress, she has a special kind of smartness that takes the form of speed; she's always a little ahead of everybody, and this quicker beat—this quicker responsiveness—makes her more exciting to watch....[In KLUTE] She's maternal and provocative with customers, confident and contemptuously cool." (Pauline Kael) "Fonda's brusque sexuality in KLUTE is excellent....The implication is that she's going to get back on her feet and make it in the world without using him as a crutch." (Marjorie Rosen)
2. Julie Christie (1965-Present: DARLING; PETULIA; McCABE AND MRS. MILLER) "Julie represents a new spectrum of actresses—the anti-goddesses—but do not confuse her with just any jaunty gamin....On screen, she burns with a nervous energy...." (LIFE) "For men, I don't think it's sexiness in me that appeals to them, but an air of abandonment. Men don't want responsibilities and neither do I." (Christie on Christie)
3. Faye Dunaway (1967-Present: BONNIE AND CLYDE; THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR; LOVERS) "She is...the first American actress to bridge the gap between Hollywood's popcorn cuties, the Debbies and Dorises, and the full-bodied international queens. On the one hand she is very American, with deep roots in the South....But at the same time she is no bright-eyed square. She breathes sophistication, elegance, grace, passion, experience." (NEWSWEEK)
4. Glenda Jackson (1970-Present: WOMEN IN LOVE; SUNDAY, BLOODY SUNDAY) "tensile strength...bile and violence....Her specialty seems to be a slightly repellent hardness; it's erotic, all right, and she has a definite appeal—all edge and challenge...." (Pauline Kael)

THE DECLINE OF WOMEN AMONT THE TOP TEN BOX OFFICE STARS (1931-1972) JUDITY GUSTAFSON

The "wipe-out phenomenon"—Betty Friedan talked about it in THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE when she documented the disappearance of independent women from popular literature, beginning in the early 1940s. About that time, another disappearing act was taking place at the box office of the local movie-house. Actresses of every type were losing out to male stars in the race to capture audiences. The sudden, dramatic nature of this decline can be readily seen by comparing box office statistics from the 1930s with those from the '40s and the decades which follow. As the box office scores for filmdom's top ten money-makers show (see "Box Office Scores" below), box office appeal throughout the '30s divided fairly evenly between men and women. Shirley Temple won the top spot four years in a row, having displaced Marie Dressler, who held that distinction at the beginning of the decade. In total, sixteen actresses made the top ten during this period, among them perennial favorites Janet Gaynor, Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer, and Ginger Rogers.

In contrast, only nine actresses shared the honors during the next decade. The "wipe-out" pattern begins in 1940 when only two female stars made the top ten, a statistic which repeats itself through 1944, with the two spots shifting back and forth among Bette Davis, Betty Grable, Judy Garland, and Greer Garson. Although the ratios begin to even up in 1945 and '46, 1947 marks the start of a new plunge which hit rock bottom in 1957 when male crooners; strong, silent virile types; and Jerry Lewis took over the charts completely. Actresses did regain a foothold the next year, but over the last fifteen years a four-to-one ratio favoring the men has prevailed. And if scores for the last two years are any indication, female stars are experiencing an even bleaker period at present.

"But what about 1960?" someone out there is thinking. Four actresses placed very high on the chart that year. Was it the beginning of a comeback which didn't get off the ground? Probably not. Although four women appear, only two types are represented—the Sweet Young Thing and the Sex Goddess. (For a detailed description of these and other movie stereotypes of women, consult Joe Baunoch's categories in "An Outline of Star Roles from the Thirties to the Present.") And that brings us to another aspect of the "wipe-out phenomenon"—not only did actresses in general disappear in the box-office contest, but, specifically, entire types did a fast fade-out once the "wipe-out" was under way.

The decade of the '30s stands out from recent years, not only for its sexual equality at the box office but also for the wide range of characters it offered movie-goers. Sweet young things like Janet Gaynor and Shirley Temple were always represented in the marketplace but Joan Crawford, playing the Vixen or varieties of the Independent Woman, also continued to draw crowds, as did Norma Shearer in the guise of Gracious Lady or Long-suffering Lady. Two Sex Goddesses, Jean Harlow and Mae West, enjoyed a brief sojourn in the top ranks, but thanks to renewed effort by the Hays Office, the Catholic Legion of Decency, and many Protestant churchmen to reinforce the Production Code, 1934 marks the beginning of the end for sex in American movies for the next twenty years.

Blatant sexual seductiveness may have been banned from the screen but sex appeal (sexiness without the invitation to sin) found a new market outlet in the Showgirl. The rise of the Showgirl also accompanies the decline in popularity of her less glamorous double, the Sweet Young Thing. This type first appears in the top ten during the late '30s with Sonja Henie and Alice Faye. A dazzling production number provided a good opportunity for the Sweet-Young-Thing-as-Showgirl to show off form-fitting costumes, an extra bit of décolletage, or a shapely limb. Judy Garland carried this type into the '40s, the period which also introduced Betty Grable to the top ten. Holding on to her wartime popularity even after the war, Grable was *the* Showgirl for ten straight years, setting the box office record for female stars. When Grable dropped out of the top ten, so did the Showgirl.

Other types which carried over from the '30s to the '40s are the Gracious Ladies, the Vixens and the Long-suffering Ladies, although there is a five-year gap between the disappearance of long-suffering Norma Shearer and long-suffering Bette Davis' rise to the top in 1939. Similarly, when gracious Greer Garson made the chart in 1942 for MRS. MINIVER, it had been six years since Claudette Colbert and Jeanette MacDonald had graced the list. Carrying on both types Ingrid Bergman graciously suffered, with the audience's great approval, for three years. Although the Gracious Lady, chiefly in the person of Deborah Kerr, is still making films, the type had disappeared from among the top money-makers until Katherine Hepburn's performance in GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER. The Long-suffering Lady occasionally hit the chart in the 1950s thanks to Susan Hayward and Jane Wyman, and reappeared with Hepburn in LION IN WINTER in 1969, but she no longer draws crowds, unless Ali McGraw, who suffered a lot in LOVE STORY, represents the wave of the future.

One type which never recovered the popularity of the '30s is the Durable Dame. With Marie Dressler's death in 1934, the type ended its run in the top ten, although it never disappeared from films. The Independent Woman also lost popularity in the '40s. Bette Davis, who does fit the description, owed her durability at the box-office to the emotional appeal of her performance rather than to her independence. In recent years, the Independent Woman made a brief comeback with Shirley MacLaine in 1964, and again in 1969 and '70 with Barbra Streisand playing Brassy Moderns.

The career of Doris Day provides an interesting statistic for the 1950s. When her name dropped from the top ten after 1952 no Sweet Young Thing rose to replace her. While magazines and advertising promoted the Feminine Mystique and the Happy Housewife Heroine, the movies once again began selling Sex. Marilyn Monroe's success marked the return of the Sex Goddess to the top ten in 1953, and with Elizabeth Taylor's transformation from Sweet Young Thing to siren, another sex goddess appeared for a long run, beginning in 1958.

Doris Day returned to the top ten in 1959 and went on to become the most popular female star of the decade, second only to John Wayne in box-office earnings. Although she often played the Happy Housewife Heroine (with a vengeance) she never abandoned the image of Sweet Young Thing. Sandra Dee, memorable for her performance in GIDGET, also proved that virginity is marketable by bringing in a phenomenal income to movie theaters four years running, a record also equaled by Julie Andrews. Among female stars, only Elizabeth Taylor, now specializing in the Vixen, has offered continuing competition to Doris Day, but Taylor's popularity has dropped off in the last three years. The early '50s offer a curious parallel with the career of Susan Hayward. Although playing Long-suffering Ladies at this time, she also specialized in Vixens during her period of box office rivalry with Doris Day.

In conclusion, the "wipe-out phenomenon" left no category of actress untouched. Dealing only with the data on the top ten box office stars permits very little else in the way of conclusions. The names of stars number eleven through twenty might reveal very different patterns. A survey of female stars in top ten money-making movies might also reveal different information. However, statistics on the top ten do raise questions that cannot be ignored. For instance, the "wipe-out" of the Sex Goddess in the 1930s is the work of the Hays Office and company, but why does this type return so strongly in the '50s, even edging out the Sweet Young Thing from the top money? Was Marilyn Monroe

Hollywood's antidote to the Feminine Mystique, or was the Dumb Blond its ultimate realization? (Whatever else they were, the Sex Goddesses of the '30s weren't mindless incarnations of the libido.) Betty Grable's rise to become the nation's top pin-up girl can be explained by World War II, but what accounts for her continued success into the early '50s? The Korean War?

What triggered the box office "wipe-out" in the first place? The overwhelming popularity of male stars during the war years is understandable, since the movie screen was about the only place left where women could see an able-bodied man. But the "wipe-out" begins in 1940, almost two years before Pearl Harbor. Why does the Sweet Young Thing go into show business during this time, surviving at the box office in the identity of the Showgirl? What appeal to a Depression audience did Marie Dressler make that Marjorie Main and others were unable to repeat with later generations? What happened to Elizabeth Taylor between NATIONAL VELVET and VIRGINIA WOOLF (besides Hilton, Wilding, Todd, Fisher, and Burton)? Whatever *did* happen to Baby Jane?—J.G.

WOMEN IN THE TOP TEN
BOX OFFICE SCORES: MOVIES' TOP FEMALE STARS[1]

The Following list identifies each actress by her rank among the top ten money-making stars of the year and by the category of stereotypes she portrayed.[2] The top male star of the year is also named to offer a comparison (for reasons of space the entire list covering forty years will not be included). The scorebox after each year records the ratio of female stars to male stars; some years the total will be more than ten because teams like Rogers and Astaire, Abbot and Costello, and Martin and Lewis are listed as one entry.

1932: 1. MARIE DRESSLER (dd) 2. JANET GAYNOR (syt) 3. JOAN CRAWFORD (v/iw) 4. Charles Farrell 5. GRETA GARBO (lsl) 6. NORMA SHEARER (gl/lsl) (5 women: 5 men)

1933: 1. MARIE DRESSLER (dd) 2. Will Rogers 3. JANET GAYNOR (syt) 6. JEAN HARLOW (sxg) 8. MAE WEST (sxg) 9. NORMA SHEARER (gl/lsl) 10. JOAN CRAWFORD (v/iw) (6 women: 4 men)

1934: 1. Will Rogers 3. JANET GAYNOR (syt) 5. MAE WEST (sxg) 6. JOAN CRAWFORD (v/iw) 8. SHIRLEY TEMPLE (syt) 9. MARIE DRESSLER (dd) 10. NORMA SHEARER (gl/lsl) (6 women: 4 men)

1935: 1. SHIRLEY TEMPLE (syt) 2. Will Rogers 4. GINGER ROGERS (rg/syt) (with Fred Astaire) 5. JOAN CRAWFORD (viw) 6. CLAUDETTE COLBERT (4 women: 6 men)

1936: 1. SHIRLEY TEMPLE (syt) 2. Clark Gable 3. GINGER ROGERS (rg-syt) (with Fred Astaire) 7. JOAN CRAWFORD (viw) 8. CLAUDETTE COLBERT (gl/iw) 9. JEANETTE MAC DONALD (gl/syt) (5 women: 6 men)

1937: 1. SHIRLEY TEMPLE (syt) 2. Clark Gable 6. JANE WITHERS (brat) 7. GINGER ROGERS (rg/syt) (with Fred Astaire) 8. SONJA HENIE (syt/sg) 10. MYRNA LOY (pw) (5 women: 6 men)

1938: 1. SHIRLEY TEMPLE (syt) 2. Clark Gable 3. SONJA HENIE (syt/sg) 7. MYRNA LOW (pw) 8. JANE WITHERS (brat) 9. ALICE FAY (sg) (5 women: 5 men)

1939: 1. Mickey Rooney 5. SHIRLEY TEMPLE (syt) 6. BETTE DAVIS (v/lsl) 7. ALICE FAYE (sg) 10. SONJA HENIE (syt/sg) (4 women: 6 men)

1940: 1. Mickey Rooney 9. BETTE DAVIS (v/lsl) 10. JUDY GARLAND (sg) (**2** women: **8** men)
1941: 1. Mickey Rooney 8. BETTE DAVIS (v/lsl) 10. JUDY GARLAND (sg) (**2** women: **9** men)
1942: 1. Abbot and Costello 8. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 9. GREER GARSON (gl) (**2** women: **9** men)
1943: 1. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 2. Abbot and Costello 6. GREER GARSON (gl) (**2** women: **9** men)
1944: 1. Bing Crosby 4. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 6. GREER GARSON (gl) 10. BETTE DAVIS (v/lsl) (**3** women: **8** men)
1945: 1. Bing Crosby 3. GREER GARSON (gl) 4. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 8. JUDY GARLAND (sg) 9. MARGARET O'BRIEN (syt) (**4** women: **7** men)
MARGARET O'BRIEN (syt) 9. BETTY GRABLE (sg) (**4** women: **6** men)
1947: 1. Bing Crosby 2. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 3. INGRID BERGMAN (gl/lsl) 9. CLAUDETTE COLBERT (gl) **3** women: **7** men)
1948: 1. Bing Crosby 2. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 10. INGRID BERGMAN (gl/lsl) (**2** women: **9** men)
1949: 1. Bob Hope 7. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 8. ESTHER WILLIAMS (syt/sg) (**2** women: **9** men)
1950:1. John Wayne 4. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 8. ESTHER WILLIAMS (syt/sg) (**2** women: **9** men)
1951: 1. John Wayne 3. BETTY GRABLE (sg) 9. DORIS DAY (syt) (**2**women: **10** men)
1952: 1. Martin and Lewis 7. DORIS DAY (syt) 9. SUSAN HAYWARD (v/lsl) (**2** women: **9** men)
1953: 1. Gary Cooper 6. MARILYN MONROE (sxg) 9. SUSAN HAYWARD (v/lsl) (**2** women: **9** men)
1954: 1. John Wayne 5. MARILYN MONROE (sxg) 9. JANE WYMAN (lsl) (**2** women: **9** men)
1955:1. James Stewart 2. GRACE KELLY (cb) 9. JUNE ALLYSON (pw) (**2** women: **9** men)
1956: 1. William Holden 8. MARILYN MONROE (sxg) 9. KIM NOVAK (sxg) (**2** women: **9** men)
1957: 1. Rock Hudson 2. John Waynes3. Pat Boone 4. Elvis Presley 5. Frank Sinatra 6. Gary Coopedi7. William Holden 8. James Stewart 9. Jerry Lewis 10. Yul Brynner (**0** women: **10** men)
1958: 1. Glenn Ford 2. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (sxg/ff) 7. BRIGITTE BARDOT (sxg) (**2** women: **8** men)
1959: 1. Rock Hudson 4. DORIS DAY (syt) 5. DEBBIE REYNOLDS (syt) 10. SUSAN HAYWARD (v/lsl) (**4** women: **6** men)
1960: 1. DORIS DAY (syt) 2. Rock Hudson 4. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (sxg/ff) 5. DEBBIE REYNOLDS (syt) 7. SANDRA DEE (syt) (**4** women: **6** men)
1961: 1. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (sxg/ff) 2. Rock Hudson 3. DORIS DAY (syt) 6. SANDRA DEE (syt) (**3** women: **7** men)
1962: 1. DORIS DAY (syt) 2. Rock Hudson 6. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (sxg/ff) 9. SANDRA DEE (syt) (**3** women: **7** men)
1963: 1. DORIS DAY (syt) 2. John Wayne 6. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (sxg/ff) 8. SANDRA DEE (syt) (**3** women: **7** men)
1964: 1. DORIS DAY (syt) 2. Jack Lemmon 7. SHIRLEY MAC LAINE (iw/sxg) 8. ANN-MARGARET (sxg) (**3** women: **7** men)
1965: 1. Sean Connery 3. DORIS DAY (syt) 4. JULIE ANDREWS (syt) 9. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (v) (**3** women: **7** men)

1966:1. JULIE ANDREWS (syt) 2. Sean Connery 3. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (v) 8. DORIS DAY (syt) (3 women: 7 men)
1967: 1. JULIE ANDREWS (syt) 2. Lee Marvin 6. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (v) (2 women: 8 men)
1968:1. Sidney Poitier 3. JULIE ANDREWS (syt) 10. ELIZABETH TAYLOR (v) (2 women: 8 men)
1969: 1. Paul Newman 9. KATHARINE HEPBURN (gl/lsl) 10. BARBRA STREISAND (bm) (2 women: 8 men)
1970: 1. Paul Newman 9. BARBRA STREISAND (bm) (1 woman: 9 men)
1971: 1. John Wayne 8. ALI MC GRAW (syt/lsl) (1 woman: 9 men)

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1 *Editor's Footnote:* Joe Baunoch began his work on this subject while a graduate student of mine at WSU and was writing his graduate essay on the theme when I left. He and I may one day co-author a volume under the title FILM STEREOTYPES OF AMERICAN WOMEN, pooling our findings here recorded in outline form. But we feel we ought to spend some time catching up on old movies and movie stereotypes first. In the meantime, I hope this chapter and the next will represent our approach and perhaps help those planning women's studies programs in incorporating film into their courses.

Two warnings are in order, however. First, the outline in Section I represents our research in progress, subject to change when we feel more confident about some of the categories. Its general aim is to provide an overall view of the "sterotypes"—images, roles, archetypes—of women in American film. Secondly, Joe and I disagree on where to draw the line between "starring" roles and "supporting" roles; the outline here represents a compromise, although stars definitely predominate. I will add my comments on the two categories I feel least satisfied with—" The Sexually Frustrated Neurotic" and "The Durable Dame"— in footnotes to the appropriate passages.—BC.

2 In the late forties and fifties a few maturing top-rank names join the ranks of Perfect Motherhood, more notably Perfect Wife Myrna Loy (THE RED PONY; CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN; BELLES ON THEIR TOES) and Gracious Lady Irene Dunne (LIFE WITH FATHER; I REMEMBER MAMA).—JB.

3 *Editor's Footnote:* This is the first of the two sub-categories I felt more unsure about. My original suggestion to Joe for the title was "The Frustrated Spinster," but he demonstrated convincingly that the type was as often married, separated, or widowed as single (a finding interesting to compare to Delores Schmidtt, discovery that "The Great American Bitch" of the literature of the 1930's was not a spinster bitch but a frustrated wife. See Schmidt in AW&AS, Vol. 1, and Gustafson's reply in Vol. 2.) What the characters playing this type do have in common is sexual frustration: the movies project a sterotyped motive in their presumption that she is neurotic because someone else got her man or that all she needs to straighten her out is "a good lay."—BC.

4 During the late forties and early fifties, another Emotive Woman flourished briefly: the Helpless Grotesque. A sister (sometimes almost a twin) to either the Long-Suffering Lady or the Frustrated Neurotic, she, however, is defortified, de-glamorized, or debunked. She lacks the Long-Suffering Lady's nobility and is not usually given to the open bitch-hysteria that brands the Frustrated Neurotic. A loser (whether a has-been or a never-was), she retreats into a ivate world of fantasy and/or madness and/or alcohol and is one of the

hallmarks of the newly anxious age. Examples are Vivien Leigh in A STREET CAR NAMED DESIRE, Gloria Swanson in SUNSET BOULEVARD, Olivia deHavilland in THE SNAKE PIT, and Shirley Booth in COME BACK, LITTLE SHEBA.—JB.

5 *Editor's Footnote:* This category was created primarily for Marie Dressler who, after all, was the Number One film star in box-office terms for two years. Joe Baunoch originally had put her in a category he called "The Slattern" (along with Marjorie Main) but discoveree that most of the others who played the role were supporting rather than staring actresses. My own view was that Dressler's "Tugboat Annie" and other roles seemed to have more in common with the strong mothers like Ma Joad (except they were not necessarily married) or the Brassy Moderns who played Annie Oakley (their common ancestors may be in Henry Nash Smith's "Dime Novel Heroines" like Hurricane Nell, Wild Edna, Calamity Jane, and in the real-life pioneer women depicted especially by women historians) than with the slattern types. If unmarried, the Dame type, I thought, might be paired with the Spinster in a separate category, but Joe's findings again showed this tough character to be as often married as not. Unsatisfied with both her label and the place we have put her, we invite suggestions from others who may be doing similar research.—BC

6 From "Barbra: Hollywood's Unhappy Queen," an article that appeared, interestingly, in the same issue of MOVIE DIGEST, July 1972, as Marjorie Rosen's impassioned plea against film stereotypes of women.—BC.

WOMEN IN THE TOP TEN

1 Based on information from "Money-Making Stars Polls," an annual poll of circuit and independent exhibitors in the United States conducted by Quigley Publications' Motion Picture Herald and Fame.

2 The abbreviations following each name refer to categories described in Joe Baunoch's "An Outline of Star Roles from the Thirties to the Present." Since most roles overlap stereotypes or even go beyond them, use of such categories must be recognized as an expediency rather than dogma. The categories used here are: Durable Dame (dd), Sweet Young Thing (syt), Vixen (v), Independent Woman (iw), Long-suffering Lady (lsl), Sex Goddess (sxg), Gracious Lady (gl), Regular Gal (rg), Showgirl (sg), Perfect Wife (pw), Cool Beauty (cb), Femme Fatale (ff), and Brassy Modern (bm); and Jane Withers, for want of another word, is a Brat.

WHAT DO YOU SAY WHEN A MAN TELLS YOU YOU HAVE THE SOFTEST SKIN?

do you say
its progesterone, progesterone makes it soft?
when he says
you have big brown eyes
do you say
of course
I'm nearsighted?

my body grew in rings
like a tree trunk
at the center I'm always 10
at the center I'm always wearing

pink plastic glasses
braces
wire wrapped around my head
a mouth full of rubber bands
I have buck teeth I can spit through
corrective shoes
pimples
no legs
no butt
no breasts

one day my mother buys me falsies
overnight I grow from 28AA to 36D
I look down and notice I can't see my feet
I feel like a fork-lift
I imagine they are realies

in gym the girls steal my bra
and throw it in the pool
my rubber breasts float away
like humpbacked whales
I dive for them
over and over
I dive for my breasts
and come up flat

what do you say when a man tells you
you're beautiful
do you tell him
I'm still fishing
I'm still fishing for my body.

Mary Mackey

DEGRADATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Our freedom's uncontested now,
Careers are not protested now,
The field's a bit congested now
With women on the rise.

We take our place in world affairs,
Fill lawyer's benches, college chairs,
We doctor, preach, we fly—who cares?
The limit is the skies!

We're wise as owls in politics
And quickly learn controlling tricks;
We move in all the Upper Cliques,
It's good to feel we can.

But with this new equality
We'd outlaw with finality
That masculine banality—

"SHE THINKS JUST LIKE A MAN."

—Corinne Geeting, from LIB RIB, 1973.

CHAPTER EIGHT

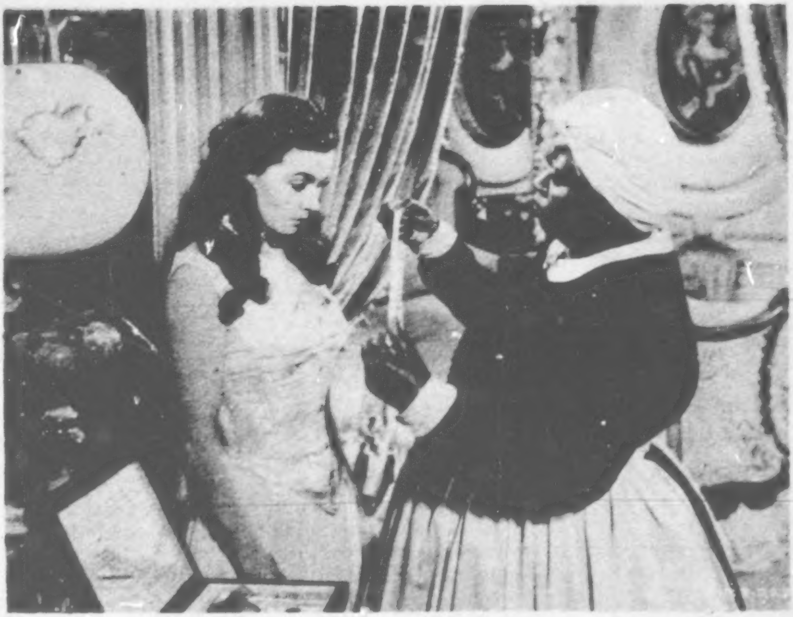
Case Study: Two Southern Stereotypes

A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY - THE WOMEN IN GONE WITH THE WIND VS. A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

In film, as in literature, painting, and other areas of study involving Part I stereotypes, it is not enough to identify and classify individual images of women. The next series of steps involves examination of the interaction (1) between women of different types, (2) between women and men, and)3) between women and women OR women and men of different classes, races, regions, ages, and personalities. Such examination opens the way to a large and complex study of stereotyping: stereotyped attitudes, stereotyped relationships, the study of types in the context of culture, and especially the study of confrontations—the stuff of which film dramas are made. For my purpose here, I asked Joe Baunoch if he would work with me on a single comparison to illustrate, as a case study, some of these complexities. I chose two films, both starring the same actress, Vivien Leigh, in roles that involve, (in different ways) a struggle against a single stereotype—that of the "Southern belle."

A comparison of the two photographs on the pages that follow, the first from GONE WITH THE WIND (MGM)[1], the second from A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE (Warner Brothers)[2], provides us with material enough for the study of several confrontations.

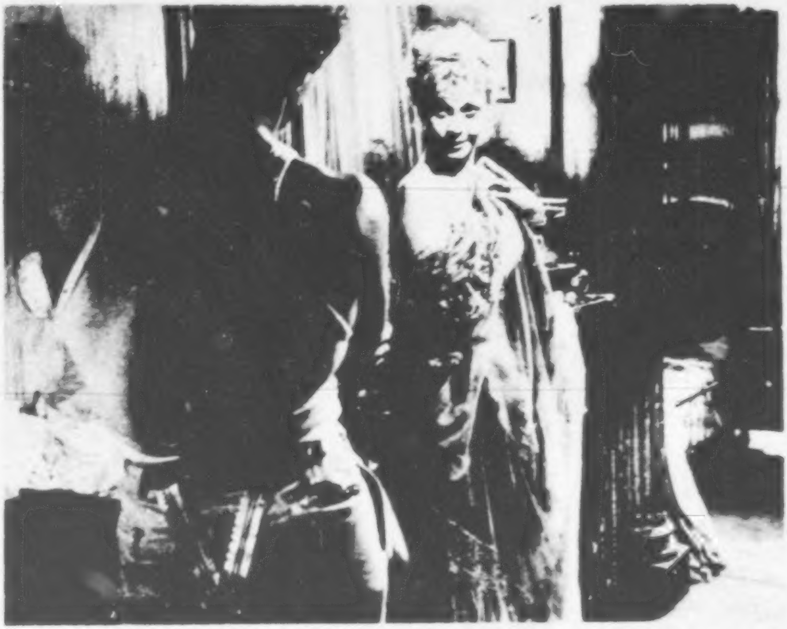
To begin with, in *Figure 10,* two female stereotypes stand face to face—the white Southern belle (in Scarlett's case, a version of Baunoch's "Vixen" type) and the black Mammy played by Hattie McDaniel (a version of his "Mother/Mammy/Mom/Ma" type). Mammy is helping Scarlett dress for the ball; having laced up her corset as tight as she can, she shows Scarlett the tape measure that will decide whether she can enjoy the food at the banquet (Scarlett has lusty appetites) or must pass it by to prevent her lovely waistline from exceeding the crucial eighteen inches. In the photo, Scarlett's "femininity" image contrasts sharply to Mammy's image of "femaleness," if I may use these two words to underscore a central polarity between opposites among stereotypes of women. Scarlett projects the Feminine standard of beauty, more artificial than natural (corsets, hairdos, makeup), yet perfect for the part with her slender figure, lovely features, and dark hair against alabaster skin. (In the rhetoric of Romantics, the white skin of the Fair Maiden is always "alabaster"—a cue to the Feminine stereotype in the speaker's mind.) Mammy, apart from her blackness, projects the Female principle: she is the large Earth-mother, natural, capable, generous and generously proportioned, a surrogate



1 Figure 10, Permission for photo SIP-108-227 from GONE WITH THE WIND, a David O. Selznick Technicolor Productions by Metro-Goldwyn Mayer (all rights reserved). Photo obtained from Theatre Advertising Co., 704 NW Jersey Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C.

parent in ths instance, an oracle of wisdom, faithful and supportive and strong—possessed of that "inner space" celebrated by Erik Erikson as a quality unique to the female sex.[3]

Mammy is a Black version of this Earth-mother stereotype at the same time that she stereotypes the ante-bellum Black image (her male counterpart is Uncle Tom), essentially Southern Black, I think. With her hankerchief head and ample bosom, she is Aunt Jemima and Faulkner's Dilsey of THE SOUND AND THE FURY (both singing to themselves in the warm kitchen as they stir up the biscuits/pancakes for their white folks.) She is most of the roles Ethel Waters ever played (think of MEMBER OF THE WEDDING, for instance), or Hattie McDaniel (whose "Beulah" of radio fame was a slightly more comic version of the type), or later, such stars as Claudia McNeil (think of RAISIN IN THE SUN). Among black vocalists, Bessie Smith projected the image as Ma Rainey had before her (in contrast, say, to Billie Holiday), and later, so did Mahalia Jackson, and in their way, the later Ella Fitzgerald, Della Reese, and Aretha Franklin. One can see the stereotype evolve historically as it passes from the Mammies and Aunties of the Southern plantations to the day workers and domestics, North and South, who know how to simulate the Mammy Mask when it seems to be an unspoken requirement in their white employers' expectations that go with the job. The role still calls for the same basic qualities: loyalty to the white folks, the capacity to endure, friendliness toward children, and super-Christian saintliness and forbearance—even if the employer is herself not a Christian. In Hattie McDaniel's Mammy, the stereotype (an essentially POSITIVE one) is incarnate.



2 *Figure 11,* Permission for photo 51/456 (copyright WBPI) from A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, an Elia Kazan Production by Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc. Photo obtained from Warner Brothers Picture Distributing Corporation. Property of National Screen Service Corporation, copyright 1951.
Figure 10: Scarlett and Mammy in GONE WITH THE WIND

In *Figure 11,* Blanche DuBois stands beneath the naked light bulb from which Mitch (Karl Malden) had previously ripped the paper lampshade to reveal the tattered reality of her age and her shabby-genteel clothing. In the photograph, the famous Brando shoulders are all that are seen, but they are sinister enough in the shadows to remind us that the rape is about to occur, while Blanche's look of practiced coquettishness is a Mask for the Southern Belle as surely as the Mammy Mask is for the black women; it conceals almost completely the fear that lies beneath.

In one sense, using the Polish and lower-class Kowalski to represent the "new" Yankee types—cf. the Snopeses—who invade the South and take it over after the Old South types die out, decay, degenerate, one can interpret the photograph as a confrontation between North and South, between rising lower-middle class and declining upper class, as well as the usual confrontation between male and female about to reenact the battle of the sexes on the nearest couch. More than that, the qualities of virtue conventionally associated with North and South—call it Northern pragmatism, a forthrightness and a proclivity for the straight truth as against Southern romanticism and mystery and "the Cult of the Great Southern Heart" (W.J. Cash) —are here shown in confrontation with one another at a point in time and fictional analysis (we call it "realism") when *both* sets of qualities have become sleazy caricatures of themselves. One could go further to suggest the North is male, the South female in the mythic imagination of Americans. Thomas Wolfe insisted upon such an interpretation when he called the South "the dark Helen of our blood"—that is, *after* he himself had moved to New York. But that particular argument would take more time and space than I care to spend on it here.

Finally, comparing the two photographs to one another, without entering into the context of the stories they illustrate, we can see a confrontation between two stages of history—early and late—in the development of the South or, at least, the history of the South as Southern fictionalists and historians have given it to us. In that contrast is seen one more instance of the theme of this collection of papers, the theme of myth versus reality: the white belle attended by her faithful servant amid the opulence of the plantation mansion's bedroom represents the original myth; the grotesque woman exposed by the brutal, harsh light of Truth to be a remnant of the past trapped in an alien and sordid environment represents the later reality. It is this reality that so many Southern authors insist upon in their revisionist dramas, novels, poetry and texts. In both cases, the White Woman in the drama *was* the South—first as Miss Anne whose purity represented the purity of the region, later as the Fallen Southern Woman (as played by Joanne Woodward, Elizabeth Taylor, and the remarkable Geraldine Page oftener than by Leigh), one whose fall from the pedestal gave male authors reason for despair over the Lost South, the Lost Cause, the Loss of Purity and Chastity (so Quentin Compson commits suicide in THE SOUND AND THE FURY and Paul Newman refuses to sleep with his wife in CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF) and gave a host of Southern women writers a subject drawn from autobiography. If the frontiersman, the Western hero, the Yankee, the Puritan, and the organization man have been *male* embodiments of America as envisioned by the North at various points in the national history, then the Southern Woman by contrast has served as a symbol of a very different kind for the regional self-image of the South.

On this theme, the image of the Southern woman as viewed by observers over the years—those who praise and those who attack, those who see myth and those who see reality, from 1854 (Fitzhugh) to 1972 (Frady)—I would like to quote the following ten sources (see Anne Scott, THE SOUTHERN LADY, for further discussion of the theme):

1. THE CONFEDERATE WOMAN DESCRIBED

(Scott, 1970)

The Confederate woman. Imagination cannot dwell too tenderly upon a theme so inspiring. Reverence cannot linger too fondly at so pure an altar. The historian's pen, which tells of a Rome and of a Sparta—aye the pen of inspiration which tells of an Israel—has not portrayed her superior, if indeed, her equal; nor may we expect to find it in all the hidden future. It took the civilization of an Old South to produce her—a civilization whose exquisite but fallen fabric now belongs to the Dust of Dreams. But we have not lost the blood royal of the ancient line; and in the veins of an infant Southland still ripples the heroic strain. The Confederate woman, in her silent influence, in her eternal vigil, still abides. Her gentle spirit is the priceless heritage of her daughters. The old queen passes, but the young queen lives; and radiant, like the morning, on her brow, is Dixie's diadem. —United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1920, in A.F. Scott, THE SOUTHERN LADY (Chicago, 1970), pp. 221-22.

2. THE PEDESTAL HAS FALLEN, THANK GOD

(Lewis, 1925)

The pedestal has crashed. There are many even now who would patch the idol together. [But] it is broken thank God, beyond repair. For...it was only an image after all....In its place is a woman of flesh and blood, not a queen, or a saint, nor a symbol, but a human being with human faults and human virtues, a woman still only slowly rising to full stature, but with the sun of freedom on her face.

—Nell Battle Lewis, "Incidently, "RALEIGH NEWS AND OBSERVER, 3 May 1925.

3. THE PEDESTAL HAS NOT FALLEN

(Frady, 1972)

The southern Belle is still with us—charming, utterly feminine and astonishingly asexual...

The peculiar triumph of the Lady of the Magnolias is that she has uncannily persevered, across all the generations, as an utter social figurine, a creature of manners—manners that once may have adorned a certain scruffy and haggard grandeur but since have adorned not even that, merely a life of Junior League teas, tennis, Republican den meetings, football weekends and perhaps a few indecisive suburban infidelities....

The truth is, contrary to all the conventional celebration, the Lady of the Magnolias is finally and profoundly antisensual. She cultivates an elaborate femininity abstracted altogether out of the glandular: evanescent, scintillating, but ultimately and indefatigably inconclusive. The pattern of her life consists of passing maybe her first 25 years after pubescence as an imperishable belle, a deathless debutante, and then converting herself at a certain point into an austere formidable Romanlike dowager, delivered safely beyond the gusting of the senses into a kind of camphor-scented quiescence. Of course, a few, like Blanche duBois, never quite make the transition. But through both incarnations, she skips any middle mellow period of true easy intimacy with men.

—Marshall Frady, "Skirmishes with the Ladies of the Magnolias," PLAYBOY MAGAZINE, Sept. 1972, pp. 121 &214.

4. HER WEAKNESS WAS HER STRENGTH (ATTRACTION?)

(Fitzhugh, 1854)

So long as she is nervous, fickle, capricious, delicate, diffident and dependent, man will worship and adore her. Her weakness is her strength, and her true art is to cultivate and improve that weakness. Woman naturally shrinks from public gaze, and from the struggle and competition of life....in truth, woman, like children, has but one right and that is the right to protection. The right to protection involves the obligation to obey. A husband, a lord and master, whom she should love, honor and obey, nature designed for every woman....If she be obedient she stands little danger of maltreatment.

—George Fitzhugh, SOCIOLOGY FOR THE SOUTH (Richmond: Morris, 1854), pp. 214-5.

5. HER STRENGTH WAS HER SERENITY BUT...
(Glasgow, 1902)

The cares she met with such serenity had been too heavy for her strength; they had driven the bloom from her cheeks and the lustre from her eyes; and, though she had not faltered at her task, she had drooped daily and grown older than her years. The master might live with lavish disregard of the morrow not the master's wife. For him were the open house, the shining table, the well-stocked wine cellar and the rides over the dewey fields; for her the care of her home and children, and of the souls and bodies of the black people that had been given into her hands.

—Ellen Glasgow, THE BATTLE GROUND (New York: Doubleday & Page, 1902), p. 48.

6. "ALL THOSE SELF-SACRIFICING ANTE-BELLUM WIVES"
(Scott, 1970)

"The rapidity with which women have aged in the past, their invalidism, mental breakdown and early death have been in part because of the strain of concealing irritation that was not permitted self-expression."—Ernest R. Groves, JOURNAL OF SOCIAL FORCES 6 (June 1928), quoted by Anne Scott, who then adds: One is reminded of all those self-sacrificing ante-bellum wives, and of the fact that Ellen Glasgow's mother suffered a mental breakdown, presumably because of her tyrannical husband.

—Scott, pp. 216-17.

7. ON SCARLETT: NORTHERN STEREOTYPE OF THE SUFFERING SOUTH? BITCH-KILLER OF AN EROTIC FABLE?
(Fiedler, 1960)

GONE WITH THE WIND's heroine, Scarlett O'Hara, is less the portrait of a woman than an embodiment of the Northern stereotypes of the suffering South (the really orthodox Daughters of the Confederacy walked out on her!): corrupt, vain, though at last more sinned against than sinning. The sentimentality of GONE WITH THE WIND is chiefly political; but its politics is embodied in an erotic fable, whose heroine is permitted an act of violence beyond anything Brockden Brown allowed Constantia Dudley. She is allowed not merely to kill a would-be attacker, but to *enjoy* the act with a joy deeper, more organic than any she finds in love. [sez he]

"Like lightening, she shoved her weapon over the banisters and into the startled bearded face. Before he could even fumble at his belt, she pulled the trigger....and suddenly she was vitally alive again, vitally glad with a cool tigerish joy. She could have ground her heel into the gaping wound which had been his nose and talen sweet pleasure in the feel of his warm blood on her bare feet. She had struck a blow for Tara—and for Ellen."

For the old plantation and for the abused woman: these are the causes in whose name the New Woman strikes; and avenging the fallen Clarissas of the past, she becomes the bitch-killer.

—Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL (New York: Dell, 1970) p. 328.

8. ON SCARLETT: A FIGHTER STEREOTYPED AS VIXEN?
(Rosen, 1972)

The most nopular film of the 30's (indeed of all time until THE SOUND OF MUSIC) was GONE WITH THE WIND. Other movie women may have been doomed to "sit and watch" but not Scarlett. Vividly brought to life by Vivien Leigh, she was strong, a fighter, the savior of her family, and a shrewd business woman. She eventually owned a thriving lumberyard, remember? But WHY did she undertake this latter enterprise? To increase her hold on Ashley Wilkes. It was also for the same Mr. Wilkes that she methodically ruined the life of every man to cross her path. So, Scarlett, the vixen, paid for her wiles when Rhett—her real love, she discovered, alas—finally walked off into the magnolias for good. She was left desolate, and self-centered as ever—still plotting with her famous curtain line: "After all, tomorrow IS another day."

—Marjorie Rosen, "Goodbye, Sweet And Lovely: The Movies That Women's Lib Would Like to Burn," MOVIE DIGEST, vol. 1, no. 4 (July 1972), pp. 40-41.

9. ON BLANCHE: REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OLD SOUTH STEREOTYPE
(CF, Frady, above, who sees her as an abberation from the stereotype)

"The fact that there actually is...a streetcar called Desire clanging through New Orleans, has merely set a fine imagination to work." It is true that to get to Stella's slum apartment Blanche has to transfer from Desire to Cemeteries and arrive at Elysian Fields (where she is alien)...Blanche, the representative of the cultural and ideal is...sexually immoral [and so]...as representative of the Old South, dissipates her power...far from failing to recognize her cultural (and personal) past, she is inextricably bound to it and, hence, caught in a neurotic limbo....[I]n Blanche, who is involved with both real and ideal and cannot reconcile them, nymphomania and prudery, love of the past and hatred of the past, genuine culture and pretentious fakery exist at the same time. And thus Blanche can represent one way the South can go: unable to face the contrast between the romantic past and the realistic present, Blanche violently betrays her own code while desperately pretending to maintain it. That way inevitably lies Cemeteries.

—Jacob H. Adler, "The Rose and the Fox: Notes on the Southern Drama," in Rubin and Jacobs, eds., SOUTH: MODERN SOUTHERN LITERATURE IN ITS CLUTURAL SETTING (Doubleday, 1961), pp. 362-63.

10. ON WRITERS OF THE SOUTHERN RENASCENCE
(Rubin, 1961)

"This conflict—the individual within society, proud of it and often as not its victim... is present in everyone of the Southern writers." "[Allen] 'Tate sensed that the unique quality which seemed to give force and range to the work of himself and his contemporaries was a kind of historical vision...That backward glance gave us the Southern renascence, a literature conscious of the past in the present." Rubin in *op. cit.*, pp. 13, 37.

SCARLETTE VS. BLANCHE: A BELLE BY ANY OTHER NAME

JOSEPH N. BAUNOCH

"As God is my witness, I'm going to live through this, and when it's over, I'll never be hungry again." Silhouette heroine against blazing sky; pan out in bold sweep; inflate soundtrack violins; cut to "Intermission."

With Scarlett O'Hara's fiery, tear-drenched oath hurled to the heavens, the first half of GONE WITH THE WIND surges to its impassioned apogee. Audiences face the intermission with a comfortably bolstered sense of triumphs to come. And they do, they do. Scarlett, after enduring the annhilations of a Civil War—parents, husband, home, affluence, a venerated lifestyle, all have a dozen gilded protagonists. There hasn't been a spitfire, before or since, who so inflamed the public fancy. In 1939, her name was almost as much a household word as Roosevelt's or Hitler's or Shirley Temple's. The book, published three years earlier, had already stirred its own pre-movie mania, and to film fans (some 90,000,000 of them filling theatres weekly in those days), the most pressing question of the day, amplified by David O. Selznick's publicity men, was "Who will play Scarlett?" Practically every Hollywood actress who could muster a drawl prayed for the part, often singled as "the most coveted role in movie history."

The over-ballyhooed two-year quest ended when Vivien Leigh passed her screen test. A happy choice she was, but nonetheless less than ecstatic about the girl she played. "Everything she [Scarlett] does is the result of premeditation. She is strong, capable, practical," the actress once remarked; several years later she added, "I never liked Scarlett. I knew it was a marvellous part, but I never cared for her. I couldn't find anything of myself in her, except for one line...it was the only thing in the character I could take hold of. It's the scene after Frank's funeral, when she gets drunk and tells Rhett how glad she is her mother's dead and can't see her. 'She brought me up to be kind and thoughtful and ladylike, just like her, and I've been such a disappointment.' I liked her then, and perhaps at the end." Like her or not, Miss Leigh played Scarlett well enough to carry home an Oscar and, more crucially, to bewitch several generations of movie-goers over the past thirty-odd years (some 300,000,000 of them altogether, a coterie unmatched by any other Hollywood heroine).

A dozen years after winning her Oscar for Scarlett, Miss Leigh captured a second for still another portrait of a "belle": Blanche duBois in Tennessee Williams' A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, a type who must have seemed more congenial to Leigh's idea of reality. Blanche *is* "kind and thoughtful and ladylike." Regrettably—for Blanche. By the time she traverses Williams' prepared terrain—a sweltering, seamy section of New Orleans—Blanche's delicate sensibilities, fractured by a lifetime of privations and defeats and crucifixions, have betrayed her. It is already too late. The slings and arrows that challenge Scarlett devastate Blanche, the frail figurine—the bludgeoned victim of paranoia and nymphomania and her own pathetic gropings for a kind word, a loving hand, and the bottle.

"You didn't know Blanche as a girl," her sister Stella tells husband Stanley Kowalski, the Neanderthal type who is to play the role of final nemesis. "Nobody, nobody was tender and trusting as she was. But people like you abused her, and forced her to change." A mistress of deceptions that fooled some people, but rarely herself, Blanche admits, "I never was hard or self-sufficient enough. When people are soft—they've got to put on soft colors, the colors of butterfly wings, and put a paper lantern over the light....And I—I'm fading now! I don't know how much longer I can turn the trick." Scarlett is tough enough to see that she never *does* go hungry again. But Blanche's spirit has been ravenous for years, and by the time STREETCAR has run its pillaging course, that spirit has been starved to death.

Scarlett and Blanche have little more in common than the outward trappings of the Southern "belle": the heritage-proud gentility, the softness, the maidenliness, the coyness, the coquettish eye, the programmed prattlings, the blatant cues for flattery. But in Scarlett gentility, softness, and maidenliness are only crinoline-deep, and Blanche has been whoring for years. When Scarlett wheedles a fawning word, the word is probably little more than an echo of her own convictions. Blanche, at least ten years and a hundred anxieties older, is been wrenched from her—rebuilds her splintered life and her beloved Tara throughout the second half of the movie. Quite a feat for a wisp of a Southern belle who, for all her frills and flutters, never slips comfortably into the delicate mold of true belle-dom so sacred to the codes of the old plantation. Scarlett has codes of her own: from the start, she looms as a petulant, vixenish rebel who dances to her own drummer. Underneath her silks and laces, her babblings of barbecues and beaus, lurks an iron-willed maiden of awesome self-sufficiency.

She has guts. And as she cajoles and slugs her way back to the top, audiences revel in this epic variation on the ancient rags-to-riches myth: the Southern Dream; or rather, the American Dream, Post-Bellum-Southern-Style, courtesy of Margaret Mitchell and M-G-M. In 1939, when the film was premiered, the Dream was once again sacrosanct. The nation was crawling out from under the debris of one calamity and about to be hit in the face with another. There was a pervasive sense of pulling together for the common cause of making America "great" again; the saga of a Scarlett O'Hara and her hard times-to-good times machinations was just the sort of technicolored panacea Americans wanted. Her story is set during and after the Civil War, but Scarlett, in a sense, is as much a heroine of the 1930s as of the 1860s. Until very recent years, no two periods in our history left such conspicuous scars or made such exigent demands for true grit heroes and heroines.

Yet there is also the argument that Scarlett's story is first of all a story of the South and Southernness, that GONE WITH THE WIND, whatever the initial reservations of the unreconstructed Daughters of the Confederacy, has become, in Marshall Fishwick's phrase, "the great folk myth of the South." Certainly the impact on regional memory of the film version of the story has been pervasive, as W. J. Cash attested in his classic volume, THE MIND OF THE SOUTH:

> ...Margaret Mitchell's sentimental novel, GONE WITH THE WIND, which had curiously begun by a little offending many Southerners, ended by becoming a sort of new confession of the Southern faith. The scene at Atlanta when the motion picture made from the romance was given its first showing in the nation was one of the most remarkable which America has seen in our time. Primarily, of course, the showing, and its accompaniment of parades and balls, represented a purely commercial scheme arranged by the producers of the picture. But in the event it turned into a high ritual for the reassertion of the legend of the Old South. Atlanta became a city of pilgrimage for people from the entire region. The ceremonies were accompanied by great outbursts of emotion, which bore no relationship to the actual dramatic value of a somewhat dull and thin performance. And later on, when the picture was shown in the other towns of the South, attendance at the theaters took on the definite character of a patriotic act.[1]

Theodore White, author of THE MAKING OF THE PRESIDENT volumes, could find no apter metaphor to express the enthusiasm of Southern crowds when Nixon campaigned in the region in 1960 than to say "there had been nothing like it since GONE WITH THE WIND had premiered in Atlanta."

That Scarlett is not the noble Southern lady on the pedestal (as described by Anne Firor Scott, for example) is clear enough. But whatever her flaws of character, she has the spunk and perseverance, and in the person of Vivien Leigh, the actress who brings her to life, she has the beauty and kittenish lure of more earnest in her solicitations, her futile efforts to recapture lost convictions and wayward dreams. Even in her moments of self-mockery (i.e., "Daylight never exposed so total ruin.") she is fishing for a pooh-poohing, reassuring response.

Most of Scarlett's story is set at Tara or in a bulldozing post-bellum Atlanta. One setting is as cordial as another to her; she conquers the business world as handily as she resurrects the homestead. Blanche has lost hers. Belle Reve, like her hopes, has trickled through skittish fingers—and, once her history of local harlotry catches up with her, she's thrown out of town. Scarlett, too, outrages the guardians of moral rectitude. She flits through a string of husbands, dances in widow's weeds, tills the soil of Tara with bare hands, runs a sawmill with an iron fist, "births" Melanie's baby, shoots a man full in the face, and openly lusts after the irrevocably married Ashley Wilkes. She does a multitude of things, things that "simply aren't done" by "ladies of breeding," but the cluckings of matronly tongues roll off her back like so much rainwater. She is, as the name suggests, something of a scarlet woman, but her color is also the color of courage, and fire and life.

Blanche's name is non-color. White. Not the whiteness of chastity (although something in her remains forever pure in heart, or Williams very well may have intended to be ironic in contrasting her name to her fate), rather, it is the whiteness of petrification, of ghosts and death. As STREETCAR opens, Blanche has already hit bottom and is seeking her last sanctuary, her sister's (hopefully) nurturing arms in a squalid little New Orleans quarter called the Elysian Fields (the irony in Williams sometimes gets a bit thick). But Stella's arms, for all her good intentions, can't brace her. Blanche remains, in her creator's words, "incongruous in this setting....looking as if she were arriving at a summer tea or cocktail party in the garden district." Anxious and unassured, she comes to Stella—and to us—with every one of her earthly possessions in a single battered trunk, sixty-five cents in her purse, and all nerve ends exposed.

If Scarlett's story partly debunks and partly confirms the hallowed myths of the Old South, Blanche's story shatters them and exposes the decay within. By the end of the Civil War, so legend had it, the Old South was hearing its first death rattles, and the belle, some then thought, was on her way to becoming an anachronism.[2] Scarlett the pragmatist, Scarlett the opportunist, with her instincts for survival, read the message. No matter what her maudlin laments, she must have seen clearly that "to be kind and thoughtful and ladylike" was not the surest and quickest way to get your cut in a new world brimming with new creeds and new dollars. And as the world of the New South became overmechanized and underhumanized in the decades to follow, it gave less and less breathing space to such fragile flowers as the Southern lady and the Southern belle. By the time Blanche enters Southern literature four post-Scarlett generations later, she clearly represents the anachronism gone to seed. Long gone are the days of gentility and juleps, an inevitability that doesn't seem to have struck Blanche in time. She is both *behind* and *ahead* of her time, as much its child as Scarlett is of hers. In the late forties, after weathering the vicissitudes of a depression and a world war, some of us heard the sad ripping away of any remaining shreds of innocence. A certain disillusionment and disquietude were eating into the new era of silence, badgered conformity, and political persecution. Blanche duBois first agonized on stage in 1947, and on screen in 1951. She teeters, appropriately, on the threshold of the Age of Anxiety.

"I don't want realism. I want magic," is the pale leit-motiv with which she arms herself against the world. She covers naked light bulbs with paper lanterns and her seamy history with tales of old tributes from old admirers, but they don't shield her from the racking guilts and defeats. Her conscience has been too badly whipped to be salved by evasions and inventions no more substantial than the warbled "paper moon hanging over a cardboard sea" she endlessly evokes in the bathtub—innumerable soakings calculated, however unwittingly, to wash away something more sinister than a few hours' grime and perspiration. The baths are no more cleansing to her spirit than the fables. Not until she totally succumbs to it in her final, tragic moments of madness, does Blanche's dream world bring her refuge.

From the start, Blanche has had nowhere to go but down, partly because, even at her "worst," she could never lie in her heart. Scarlett **could**, and she was the luckier for it. Her recurrent "I'll think about it tomorrow" is a triumph of self-delusion and self-fortification. As Parker Tyler puts it, "her entire life is a series of bittersweet alternatives slipped into envelopes of postponed solutions....The mercurial nature of Scarlett's emotions is a wonder of monotony; fear, rage, malice, desire, despair—all that she requires to escape them is another moment of life, another tick of the clock....she knows that her hyperbolic emotional temperament does not hit bottom and never will. Yet she knows that nothing but death or crippling will lick her, and nothing does. Why? Because her mind is capable of infinite postponement in trying to recognize any final, unpleasant truth, any final distasteful fact....As a heroine, Scarlett is a masterpiece of self-deception, self-bribery: she can go on happily only because, in spite of her failure of character, life has bestowed on her a faculty of optimism, a faculty of isolating desire from its crisis in action—a faculty which makes her the screen's typical heroine of all time...." Another critic, Paul Michal, suggests, "the representative of a dying society," a phrase others have also used (see Frady and Adler above). The Ashleys, the Melanies, the Mammys—and the Blanches—imbedded in archaic soil, are the true representatives. Scarlett is an earthier, gaudier emblem of fresher, though not finer, clay. The pivot of the new worlds she creates, Scarlett forges ahead. Blanche's world has passed her by. Her swansong ("I'm fading now") simply isn't written in Scarlett's key.

Aside from her fleeting, whiskeyed regrets about not emulating her mother's virtues, Scarlett recognizes defeat only in her failure to catch Ashley. Throughout the movie's three hours and thirty-nine minutes she is forever fixing moony eyes on the golden-locked blue-blood—forever on the brink of making a fool of herself over this stalwart, though anemic, epitome of Southern knighthood. Saddled with wife, child, and a stultifying code of ethics, Ashley implants himself (figuratively, anyway) beyond Scarlett's reach, no matter what his own secret lustings or how feverish her gropings. But Scarlett usually has her irons in more than one fire; she almost always has that ubiquitous "tomorrow" going for her. When, during the film's closing minutes, Ashley has lost his wife, and is, at least, legally free, that particular "tomorrow" for them finally comes. But there are no promises in it. At last, perhaps, she can see beyond her marathon school-girl crush: that there is less to Ashley than met her eye; that there is something in him—as in his world—that is half-dead; that such a man and such a world could no longer satisfy her.

One could speculate that Ashley might have been perfect for Blanche, but Blanche, as always, must set her sights lower: on Mitch, her last-ditch cavalier, the bumbling suitor with a comic bulb of a nose of a putty face, sweat marks at the armpits, and a sick mother. "I want to *rest!* I want to breathe quietly again!" she tells Stella. "Yes—I *want* Mitch...*very badly!*" He is hardly the stuff that heroes of maidens' dreams are made of, but he has "a sort of sensitive look," as Blanche acclaims, that makes him "superior to the others": "You're a natural gentleman, one of the very few that are left in the world." For Mitch, she pulls out all the stops at playing the lady she would like him to believe she is. Spinning out her illusionary self-portrait for him, all youth and celibacy and respectability, she arouses his desire and respect. All the respect, if not the desire, plummet to earth when "friend" Stanley exposes to him the "realism" beneath the myth—the portrait of the lady as nymphomaniac, a portrait validated by lurid testimonials that bare all the skeletons in her past. Exit Mitch...and with him, her one remaining hope of assurance.

The Elysian Fields, far from becoming for her a last refuge, thus becomes the scene of her final drubbing. She is the sacrificial lamb in the Kowalski den, where Stanley's barbarisms, his "exposé," and his brutal, climactic rape thrash her beyond the margins of sanity. The struggle between Blanche and Stanley, as Bosley Crowther sees it, is "more than just a fundamental clash of natures between a woman and a man—...[it] transmits, indeed, a comprehension of a whole society's slow decay and the pathos of vain escapism in a crude and dynamic world...."

Both Blanche and Scarlett are pitted against superbly burly males; the screen has rarely unleashed more flamboyantly virile specimens than a Marlon Brando-Stanley Kowalski or a Clark Gable-Rhett Butler. Stanley, of course, lacks Rhett's suave facade and his sense of fair play, but then all the components of Blanche's world must be ranked several steps below the original ideal. "He acts like an animal," she bristles, "has an animal's habits....There's even something not quite to the stage of humanity yet!...something ape-like about him...." Although Rhett, like Stanley, is "on to" his combatant from the start and, for the most part, finds her charms resistable, Scarlett is a match for him. At the end, when, in response to her whimpering to Rhett about being left alone, he fires his famous parting shot, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn!", movie audiences applauded with something of the same enthusiasm they exhibited when "vixen" Bette Davis got her come-uppance in BEYOND THE FOREST. Yet even then, reduced to what could have been her final degradation before Clark Gable and the audience, Scarlett rallies: "I'll think of it tomorrow at Tara. I can stand it then. Tomorrow, I'll think of some way to get him back. After all, tomorrow is another day."

By then, of course, the line has become a sentimentalism: we have heard it too often before. It defines Scarlett's sense of relation to time, her preference for the future and for new possibility, in contrast to Blanche's sense of entrapment in the past. When confronted by her would-be rapist, Scarlett meets the threat head-on and plants a bullet in her assailant's skull; Blanche collapses when Stanley launches his assault, and mental breakdown follows. As Scarlett divests the corpse's pockets of enough greenbacks and gold pieces to set Tara in motion again, she reasons, "Well, I guess I've done murder. Well, I guess I won't think about that. I'll think about that tomorrow." The refusal to think about the unpleasant or to accept the events of history, personal or social, is hardly an attractive quality—and Scarlett's "tomorrows" eventually become a subject for laughter. But it is interesting to speculate on the possibilities for a different interpretation of Scarlett, of the film, and of Southern social history as audiences thought they saw it depicted in the film, if Margaret Mitchell had kept her original title, TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY. (A publisher persuaded her it was too similar to another title of a best-seller then current.) Instead of the affirmation Mrs. Mitchell intended, penned at a time when the nation needed all the affirmations it could get, we got one more sentimental sigh over "the burden of Southern history,"[3] one more sigh over a way of life "gone with the wind."

Blanche's sighs sound a deeper note of despair, a despair that has vexed her since adolescence. Widowed before she was seventeen, she has been shouldering the blame for the suicide of her young-poet husband for half a lifetime. As her luck would have it, the "idyllic" girlhood marriage capsized shortly after she discovered ("in the worst of all possible ways") his homosexuality. "He came to me for help. I didn't know that....he was in the quicksands and clutching at me—but I wasn't holding him out, I was slipping in with him....unable to stop myself—I suddenly said—'I saw! I know! You disgust me...' And then the searchlight which had been turned on the world was turned off again and never for one moment since has there been any light that's stronger than this...candle."

The boy's death was a prelude to what she calls "the long parade to the graveyard," a draining sequence of family deaths that she felt sentenced to sit through at Belle Reve; sister Stella, meanwhile, had been spirited off to the Kowalski Elysian Fields. "I, I, *I* took the blows in my face and my body!" mourns Blanche. "All of those deaths....You just came home in time for the funerals, Stella. And funerals are pretty compared to deaths...Unless you were there at the bed when they cried out, 'Hold me!' you'd never suspect there was the struggle for breath and bleeding. You didn't dream, but I saw. *Saw! Saw!*...the Grim Reaper had put up his tent on our doorstep."

Before long, not even the doorstep remained. By the time all those deaths were endured and paid for, Belle Reve was gone, and with it, as things turned out, Blanche's waning hold on respectability. Add to this her dismissal from a teaching job for dalliances with a teen-age student, and her fall was assured. Like her husband, she is devastated by her own sexuality. And like him, she is an easy target, and, moreover, something of a natural poet, weighted with the poet's sharpened sense of tragedy, of beauty lost or missed, and of the squalor that has displaced it. But Blanche's is a death-in-life suicide. She is the defunct aristocrat, the wavering "symbol of art and beauty" (as Mary McCarthy labels her in "Streetcar Called Success," SIGHTS AND SPECTACLE, *1937-1956,* 1956), the ex-lady-belle-schoolteacher turned prostitute and prey.

In THE BROKEN WORLD OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS (1965) Esther Merle Jackson sees her as a sort of "anti-heroic Orestes....in flight from [her] own transgressions." With Blanche, as with several of his characters, Jackson writes that "Williams explores one of the most persistent themes in American letters: the significance of human transgression. In order to examine this metaphysical problem, Williams sets in motion an anti-heroic cycle of human experience. Like Dante's poet, his anti-hero traverses the downward way in his 'dark night of the soul'....Blanche, in her downward progress...comes to the realization of her own responsibility for suffering. She becomes aware that she suffers more for her own transgressions than for the actions of her guilty ancestors. Like Orestes, she has made a guilty choice: a choice which has involved her in the suffering of others."

Once the world has slapped her down, she adds to the blows; instead of fighting back, she fights herself. The long-harbored guilts and remorses, the glaring debaucheries, the eternal tipplings, the pathological frettings over her age and appearance, the deathbed watches—all become her weapons of self-flagellation. As though to atone for her adolescent "failure," some twenty years after her husband's suicide she is still luring young men to her bed. "The opposite of death is desire," she says, and as her most palpable means of warding off awful visions of the cold spectre, she submits—chronically and endlessly—to all that seems left among the warmer, more mitigating desires. But, again and again, her bedroom rituals are as lethal to her as the Grim Reaper himself.

And she knows it. But she can't—or doesn't—stop herself. As far as we know, she puts on the brakes just once, and then, probably, only because the immediate circumstances aren't conducive. Late in the film, her advances to the Kowalskis' newsboy remain only a prologue to a scene she must have played out dozens of times. But she is, after all, in her sister's house and Mitch is expected at any moment, so she sends the boy off. Although the scene is a fleeting one, it condenses within its moment much of Blanche's complexity, her beauty as well as her decay. As she makes her move to the boy, the hints of wrecked chances and unsated desires hang over her like some ghostly betrayer, but her approach is gentle, compassionate, half-mothering. Her overture is a shabby and over-rehearsed one, the same overture that has led to disaster countless times before, but she plays it delicately and poetically. She doesn't, nor could she ever, strike a vulgar note. The scene is one of those classic backroom encounters: the tarnished woman on the make for a young innocent half her age. And yet it's just about the most touching moment in the movie.

Finally, let us consider the remaining relationships of the two women in the films to the other characters. Each film is peopled with a quartet of protagonists, their parallels and polarities spilling into and away from one another: Scarlett-Blanche, Ashley-Mitch, Rhett-Stanley, and, closing the set, Melanie and Stella. The second pair of ladies serve a clear-cut dramatic function as contradictions to the "belles" and complements to their men: the unruffled one-man woman, content with her lot, fulfilled by home, husband, and (in Stella's case, expectant) motherhood. As foils, each manages to be almost everything her opposite is not. Melanie: the soul of honor, gentility incarnate, the quintessence of kindliness and selflessness, the "real lady" Scarlett couldn't be—Stella: the happy housewife, happy because of her "healthy" sexual fulfillment. Stella has found her niche—a niche, admittedly, far apart from Melanie's, which is just as well. Stella is not another Melanie; another Melanie could never slip so easily into the Stanley Kowalski world of belches and bowling alleys. Nor is she, by any stretch of imagination another Scarlett, but she is braced by some of the same pragmatism and adaptability that help Scarlett make it through.

Ante-bellum formulas are alien to Stella. In their younger days, Blanche was the sister who loved "to be waited on," who primped in gilt-edged mirrors and catalogued her beaus, who aspired to the heights of belle-dom. When Stanley yowled his mating cry. Stella, on the other hand, split from the homestead with barely a backward glance. At ease in her domain of fried dinners and dirty bed sheets, she insists to her scandalized sister, "I'm not in anything I want to get out of." At the end, with all that familial blood under the bridge, she's no longer so sure, but whatever her move, Stella has the strength to *survive*.

Melanie's strength is thinner. She has known only one world, a world that sustains and fortifies her, and she lives comfortably within it. But in other, less congenial spheres she might have crumbled, too. Melanie is *too* nice, *too* trusting—"mealy-mouthed," as Scarlett puts it. Caught in twentieth-century combats, she could prove as sorry a warrior as Blanche, whose lineage, probably, can be traced more directly to her than to Scarlett (an interesting note: the first actress sought for Blanche's part in the film version of STREETCAR was Olivia deHavilland, the movie Melanie, but she vetoed the part.) Melanie is not—never could be—a belle; she's too gray a mouse. She is, rather, the "Southern lady" as Anne Scott has described the type. Blanche inherits her "ladylike" softness and vulnerability in a time and place when a little of Scarlett's steel would serve her better. The soft ones can't hold on. Before the theatre lights go up, Melanie is dead and Blanche has been carted off to an asylum.

Scarlett endures...as woman, as heroine, as a whole individual. An offspring of the fabled Golden Age of Hollywood, when celluloid was in the national bloodstream, she remains the most memorable of the era's great flock of independent women. Despite her plumes and hoop skirts, she is something of the Modern Woman, generations ahead of her time, and a phoenix nourished by her own brilliant, sometimes garish light.[4] Blanche—always Too-Late Blanche (by a full century, roughly)—backs into the dark ("The dark is comforting to me") and shrinks from the glare of unfrocked bulbs ("I can't stand a naked light bulb, any more than a rude remark or a vulgar action.")

By the time STREETCAR appeared, the Golden Age had faded, and the movie industry was in trouble. STREETCAR had its share of acclaim and awards, and a lot of people—many of them lured by promises of sensationalism and depravity—paid to see it. But some theatre owners grumbled that half of their patrons were walking out. Although Vivien Leigh's Blanche has been called (by Pauline Kael) one of the all-time great movie performances, it's her Scarlett that the public covets. GONE WITH THE WIND is—has been for more than three decades—the world's most popular movie, and it's Scarlett's all the way. Inside the theatre, audiences may feel that they *like* Melanie better, but Scarlett is the one who fires them, the one who makes things happen—the one they remember. She's hard, selfish, unscrupulous, unloving, but she's a winner. She holds the promise of life, of a "tomorrow" that can be something more than just "another day." And she'd give Stanley Kowalski one hell of a fight.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT

1 *Figure 10,* Permission for photo SIP-108-227 from GONE WITH THE WIND, a David O. Selznick Technicolor Productions by Metro-Goldwyn Mayer (all rights reserved). Photo obtained from Theatre Advertising Co., 704 New Jersey Ave., N. W. Washington, D.C.

2 *Figure 11,* Permission for photo 51/456 (copyright WBPI) from A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, an Elia Kazan Production by Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc. Photo obtained from Warner Brothers Picture Distributing Corporation. Property of National Screen Service Corporation, copyright 1951.

3 "Inner and Outer Space: Reflections on Womanhood" in Robert Jay Lifton, ed. THE WOMAN IN AMERICA (Houghton-Miflin, 1965).

Figure 11: Blanche Dubois and Stanley Kowalski in A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE.

SCARLETT VS. BLANCHE

1 Cash (Doubleday Anchor, 1941), p. 417. *Editor's Footnote:* It is courious that W.J. Cash, who put forth so strong a case on behalf of individualism as a

Southern trait, and of the need for toughness and grit during ante-bellum years when the Old South, contrary to myth, was more a frontier area than the "stage piece out of the eighteenth century" that legend eventually made it, should not have claimed Scarlett O'Hara—with her Irish in her—as evidence in support of his thesis. Parker Tyler, regards the film protrayals as far superior to those in the novel ("Considering that GONE WITH THE WIND, as a piece of literature, is at best but a uniquely elaborate scenario, a third-rate novel, these actors and actresses are material improvements upon their fictional prototypes."—Tyler, THE HOLLYWOOD HALLUCINATION, 1944) But Cash dismisses them as "dull and thin performances" of less importance than the audience's reaction, its sense of identification with the tale.

Nor is Cash alone in insisting that Southerners gave the nation its definition of individualism, its definition, in fact, of national uniqueness. As C. Van Woodward has put it, "After all, it fell the lot of one Southerner from Virginia to define America. The definition he wrote in 1776 voiced aspirations that were rooted in his native region before the nation was born." Yet Woodward too passes Scarlett when he decides as an historian to survey Southern writers and characters; indeed, he goes out of his way to exempt "the vogue of the conventional historical novel" from his consideration of "the place that historical consciousness plays in contemporary Southern writing." [THE BURDEN OF SOUTHERN HISTORY, 1961, pp. 25, 33, 38.]

Perhaps it is not untoward to call attention to the fact that both Cash and Woodward, among the most respected historians of the South, are not only Southern themselves, but also male—quite plausibly as accustomed to thinking of women in the mold of Southern belles and Southern ladies as other Southerners are. Brilliant as their analyses are, such men are just as likely to suffer from myopia when looking for illustrations of their theses as any other male scholars who overlook female examples. (Cash *does* include some few women among his examples of individualists, but they tend to be mavericks lost in the gallery of types.)

To a thoroughly Northern and notoriously iconoclastic Leslie Fiedler, on the other hand, there is no doubt whatever that Scarlett is a type: a bitch-killer. First Fiedler makes her out to be "an embodiment of Northern stereotypes of the suffering South," a pronouncement difficult to understand in light of Margaret Mitchell's own testimony—so like the personal testimony of Glasgow, McCullers, Welty, Grau and others—that she set out to write the novel in order to expose the Southern myths and stereotypes on which she herself had been raised. She was at least eighteen years of age, she once said, before anyone told her that the South had *lost* the War.

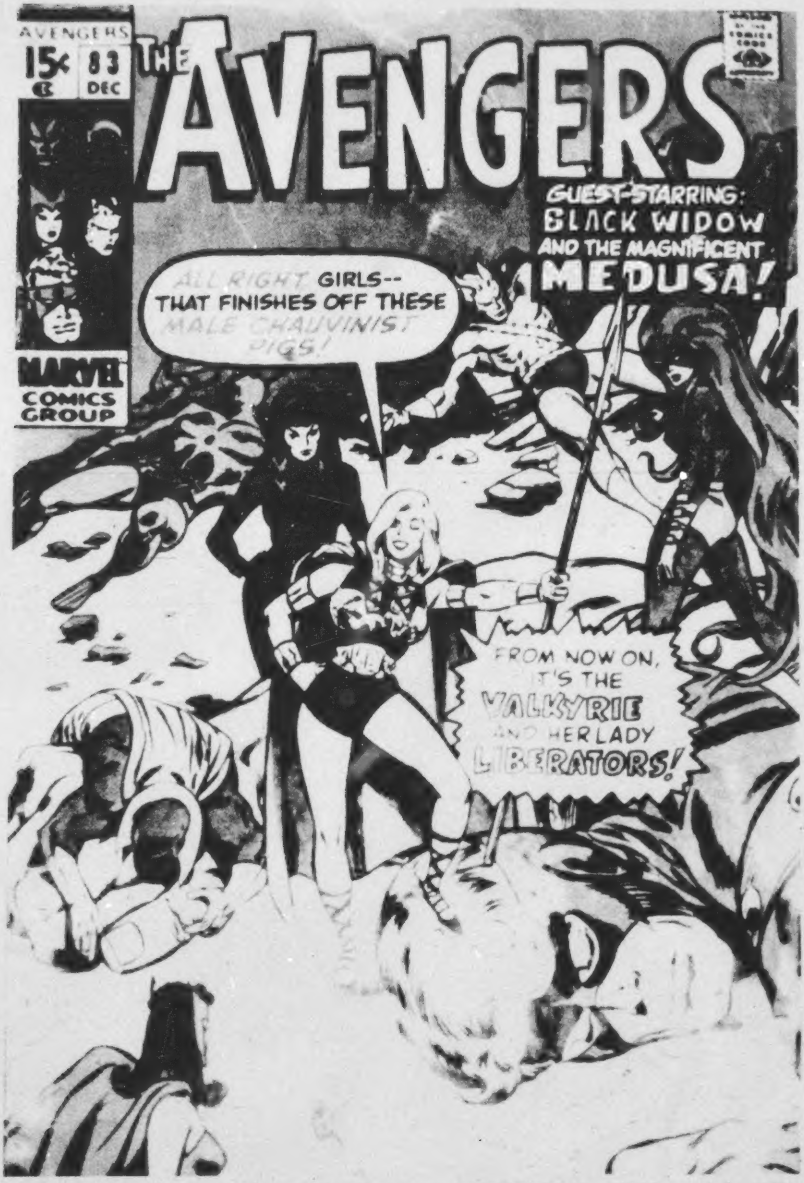
As always quoting only to his purpose, Fiedler chooses the single passage about Scarlett's feelings as she kills the would-be rapist as proof that she is the New Woman turned into bitch-killer, one who merely uses Southern morality as rationalization for some deeper psycho-sexual malady. [LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL, p. 329.]—BC

2 See statement by Lewis (1925) vs. Frady (1925) vs. Frady (1972), above.

3 An apt. title for an essay collection (pertinent to the theme) by historian C. Van Woodward. See especially Chapters 1, 2 and 8, THE BURDEN OF SOUTHERN HISTORY (Louisiana State University Press, 1960).

4 *Editor's Footnote:* Even Fiedler judges her as such when he says, "These are the causes in whose name the New Women strikes; and...becomes the bitch-killer." In 1966 Fiedler added the footnote: "But turning killer, she becomes fair game herself; and the way is open for such male counter-fantasies

as Norman Mailer's AN AMERICAN DREAM, in which...in the end, all male murders and desecrators go scot free." [Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL (Dell, new rev. ed., 1966), p. 328.] But why blame Scarlett for Rojack's murders—or, for that matter, the murders of Gore Vidal's M3 Man (see American Women and American Studies I, p. 233)? And to counter the fable in GONE WITH THE WIND, is not Baunoch's choice of Tennessee Williams, representing the male Southern writers' counter-fantasies, better than Fiedler's choice of Mailer?—BC.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ALL RIGHT GIRLS-- THAT FINISHES OFF THESE MALE CHAUVINIST PIGS!
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
FROM NOW ON, IT'S THE VALKYRIE AND HER LADY LIBERATORS!

Figure 12: Valkyrie and Her Lady Liberators, AVENGERS No. 83 (Copyright 1970, Marvel Comics Group. All Rights Reserved.)

CHAPTER NINE

Fantasizing Women's Lib - Stereotypes of Women in Comic Books

BETTY E. CHMAJ

I. MALE FANTASIES ABOUT WOMEN'S LIBERATION

On the facing page (*Figure 12*)[1] will be found as good an example as the contemporary popular media have to offer to reveal the interpretation that many men have had of women's liberation and its implications—its implications, that is, for *them*.

The advantage of comic books, as has often been pointed out, is that they are allowed—indeed, expected—to project a complete fantasy world, and in doing so, they often serve to reveal the values, fears and expectations of a culture in more subtle (and more subtly accurate) ways than, say, literature, television, or the daily newspapers. Aimed as they are at a mass market, comics must succeed in feeding the dream images of their readers—projecting the world they wish to see or dream about, in which the plots they fear or expect or hope for are played out in fantasy terms—or else the readers simply will not buy. Some years ago, Leslie Fiedler correctly identified the Superhero figure (he then named Superman, Captain Marvel and Wonder Woman as examples of the type) as "the final form" in the comics, "statistically the most popular with the most avid readers, as well as providing the only new legendary material invented along with the form rather than adapted to it."[2] Eleven years later, Fiedler noted that the comic book was having a "double renaissance." On the one hand, it had been "reinvented by the Marvel Comic group (*The fantastic Four,* etc.)...Images of Batman and Superman and Captain Marvel live deep in the minds of urbanites in an electronic age." At the same time, certain novels, he said—and I would add, certain films ranging from YELLOW SUBMARINE through FRITZ THE CAT, certain television programs, certain painters from Lichtenstein through Lindner—had borrowed from the comic books something of their style and "their scarcely believed-in archetypal presences" in order to gain for themselves something of the same "richness and resonance and a kind of humor (self-mocking without bitterness or embarrassment) which begins to see the hallmark of the age."[3]

It is in such a context that Valkyrie may be examined as the triumphant leader, so the cover of AVENGERS issue No. 83 (December, 1970))*Figure 12*) would suggest, of the group of voluptuous Superheroines who have defeated the Superheroes stretched out upon the ground. There had been fewer women than men by far among the many Marvel Comics characters to that date, but most of the major early figures (with the conspicuous exception of Sue Storm) are present here: In clockwise order around Valkyrie, they are the Wasp, Scarlet Witch, Black Widow and Medusa.[4] The giant head at center belongs to the New Goliath (the one American Superhero in this group),[5] while the Black

Panther (leader of a powerful African tribe), Quicksilver (in "real" life, Pietro, an orphan mutant like his sister Wanda, the Scarlet Witch, who would appear here to be guilty of condoning fratricide), and Vision (an android living on another person's mind tapes) all lie limply draped in the background and over Goliath's fist. In the entire story, in fact, the only *new* fiture in Valkyrie herself.

What is intriguing about the fantasy, hower, is the contrast between the cover image seen here and the actual story within. If the cover image is interpreted as the projection of a male fear of being overcome by women, even by the women men know best (or conceivably, as a female wish-image that "we shall overcome" through force), then the story within may be seen to function—as stories in comic books often do—to dissipate the male fears by providing a guaranteed "happy ending." Just how the writers and artists manage this feat after the threat of the cover image is itself a classic demonstration of the role that comics can play in the culture they serve.

At the beginning of the story, Valkyrie appears to the female Superheroines to tell her sad tale of male oppression—or of what someone with a superficial familiarity with the early rhetoric of the women's movement might assume to be the Same Sad Tale. ("My story is not unique," Valkyrie says, "at least, not up to a certain point...") But as she recounts the tale that is to explain who she is and why she has appeared in this comic book to advance her cause, any avid comic fan—certainly any Marvel fan—becomes conscious of an additional factor that intrudes surreptitiously upon the reader's point of view. This is the fact that *origins* of comics characters are of particular importance to the followers of these tales. (At trade conventions, for example, Origins issues bring the highest prices; as I write these lines, a copy of the Origin issue of WONDER WOMAN is listed in the catalogs at $40, while other Origins issues sell for $20 and $30 each.) So when Valkyrie says, "But perhaps I should briefly repeat the tale of my origin...so you will know WHO the Valkyrie is...and why I have dedicated my life to the DOWNFALL OF MALE SUPREMACY," the comics reader is alerted to expect perhaps the most important part of the tale.

In this strip, that part of the tale is accomplished with a series of flashback panels, beginning with an image of a white-coated female assistant approaching a white-coated scientist—a stereotyped relationship between The Great Professor and his Attractive Assistant borrowed from the conventions of science fiction, bearing little relation to real life in laboratories but nonetheless perfectly familiar and acceptable to audiences of movies, television and comic books. The assistant speaks:

"Dr. Erwin...I'd like to ask your opinion on..."

"I'm busy, young lady, VERY busy!" he replies. "If I find I need a SECRETARY I shall contact you!"

"The old fool—the old MALE fool!" our young maiden thinks, as she slaves on into the night. "He lives in a DREAM-WORLD where MEN have all the brains and WOMEN do all the work!...Well, I'll show him...show them ALL..."

And now the narrative at the top of the panel interrupts the recollected dialogue as Valkyrie continues to recount her story to the listening Superheroines: "However, long hours and fatigue finally took their toll...and one night I collapsed...a smoking VIAL still clutched in my outstretched hand...!" Of course, we can guess what happens: When she awakens, the vial has done its mysterious work and she learns to her utter amazement that she has acquired "fantastic STRENGTH! Unbelievable POWER!" and therefore, "MALE CHAUVINIST PIGS—BEWARE!!!"

The flashback tale of Valkyrie's origins over, the story proceeds. The scene shifts to a town in Vermont where the male Avengers have all gathered, ostensibly to participate in a town parade, and where they are soon engaged in a dramatic combat with certain "Masters of Evil" known to Marvel Comics fans. The battle between Superheroes and Supervillains rages for the usual number of pages, with one kind of supernatural power pitted against and yet another, before the Superheroines put in their appearance. Arriving in the nick of time to help their male colleagues defeat the villains, the women suddenly turn upon the unsuspecting Avengers themselves—Quicksilver, Black Panther, Goliath, and Vision the android.

"But I don't fight WOMEN—even SUPER-POWERED ones!" the Panther objects.

"Then you had better LEARN to, Avenger—," the Black Widow replies, "—if you wish to survive!" Whereupon Widow and Wasp conquer the Panther as Medusa has already conquered Quicksilver. Two down and two to go.

"Goliath—Look!" says Vision. "There—stepping out of that alley—another costumed female! At which point, our blond-braided star steps forward:

"Not just ANY female—but the most POWERFUL one of all! You have uttered your famous 'AVENGERS ASSEMBLE' for the final time!" Valkyrie declares, "From now on the war cry to REMEMBER shall be—" [and this in great yellow letters against a blood-red background] "UP AGAINST THE WALL, MALE CHAUVINIST PIGS! VRAAKKK!"

Valkyrie's lance having caught the last two males by surprise, all the Superheroes are now fallen, just as the cover of the issue had said they would, and the women ask Valkyrie what their next step must be, standing now amid the smoke and rubble of the street. What is to happen now? How will it end? Clearly here is the turning point of the tale.

And here I must interrupt. For the truth is we have already been tipped off to the ending by Valkyrie's decision to pit her fearsome battle-cry against the known signal of the Heroes; since the Good Guys always appear on cue when the cry is "AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!" whoever proposes an alternate slogan must be on the side of the Enemy. One of the endearing traits of the Marvel Comics staff, headed by Stan Lee, is its stance of serious irreverence toward the familiar American melodrama of Good versus Evil, which is still the staple plot of the comic books. Lee and Company have succeeded in creating and appealing to a new audience, one whose sensibilities prevent any too-easy acceptance of good/evil, either/or, we/they kinds of thinking, but who nonetheless yearn for the old vicarious enjoyment of fierce physical clashes. The Marvel staff has accomplished the feat of changing their readers' perspectives on the Good-versus-Evil melodrama, as upon the comic book fantasy world itself, primarily, I think, in two ways.

First, they are unabashed in exploiting the exaggerations of advertising, including unembarrassed advertising for other issues of Marvel comics, through use of parody, slang, and deliberately purpled prose. It is such sophisticated (if that is the right word) features of style that ally contemporary comic books to such trends as the New Journalism, associated especially with Tom Wolfe, Jimmy Breslin and a few others. (Indeed, the alliance is verified with the appearance of Wolfe himself, in his white suit, in later comic books, including one that features the reappearance of Valkyrie herself. More on this later.)

Secondly, Stan Lee as writer and editor initiated a practice of interrupting the narrative to comment on the action through footnotes, a practice continued by others since then, especially by Lee's successor as editor, Roy Thomas. What is involved here is the revival of a classic convention, the stance of the clown-interlocutor of the stage who steps across the footlights at whim to interrupt the audience's "suspension of disbelief" in order to pass judgment on the action (as well as, in the present case, sell more comic books by referring to action that occurred in previous issues). An asterisk (*) in the balloon carrying the words of the caracter will refer the reader to a footnote in the corner, usually signed by "Sentimental Stan," "Punctilious Stan," "Reminiscin' Roy," "Wrap-it-up Roy," etc. The parody here is of academic footnote style, exploited for humor, but the result is also functional, especially when the comments appear unexpected at crucial moments in the narrative, for they change the *nature* of the reader's involvement in the story. Interrupting, intruding on belief in the story, reorienting perspective, these comments serve to "act in the gap between art and life"—a phrase I choose deliberately to suggest another kind of alliance, the alliance between the art world of the phrase's author, painter Robert Rauschenberg, and the comic book world of Stan Lee. Rauschenberg used the phrase to explain what he was trying to achieve in his "combines," with their combinations of painted areas (art) and actual objects (life). The ambiguity of the resulting point of view, the acting-in-the-gap perspective, provides a convenient context, an almost perfect context, for popular culturists dealing with political subjects—such as women's liberation—about which public attitudes are likely to change over a period of time. On the one hand, the ambiguity seems a perfect cop-out for the authors, since it makes it virtually impossible for readers to pronounce judgment on *their* views on controversial subjects. On the other hand, the intrusions and pull-the-rug-out-from-under reversals also serve the make the entire fiction-making process more honest.

For instance, in another Avengers issue (KING-SIZED SPECIAL No. 1), the cover advertises "The BIGGEST continuous action epic ever, in this, THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS!"—which is: "The **ORIGINAL** AVENGERS JOIN TODAY'S AVENGERS AGAINST SIX OF THE MOST MIND-STAGGERING VILLAINS OF ALL TIME...!" To prepare you for this staggering experience, the editors clear things up on the opening pages by distinguishing who's who in two neat collumns:

> **The GOOD GUYS** (in alphabetical order—what else?): CAPTAIN AMERICA! GOLIATH! HAWKEYE! HERCULES! IRON MAN! QUICKSILVER! SCARLET WITCH! THOR! and last but not least, the WONDERFUL WASP!
> **The BAD GUYS** (also in alphabetical order, natch!): THE MANDARIN! ENCHANTRESS! EXECUTIONER! LIVING LASER! POWER MAN! SWORDSMAN! (Note: Sure we know that ol' Mandy's name is out of order—but do you think we're going to argue with a guy like HIM?)"[6]

In the several stories pitting the Good Guys against the Bad that follow, male heroes often take on male villains individually, as has been true in most Marvel confrontations, while their female counterparts have acted primarily in "supporting roles" with men. For instance, when the Executioner (bad guy) challenges Hercules (good guy), the Enchantress (bad) and Scarlet Witch (good) are seen in the background of the panel as the following exchange occurs:

> EXECUTIONER: And now...—let the battle BEGIN!!
> ENCHANTRESS: You against the PRINCE OF POWER—and I against the mortal FEMALE!

HERCULES: BEWARE, Wanda! The Enchantress can weave SPELLS without limit—and we fight in a clime unknown

SCARLET WITCH: Have no fear! I will acquit myself with HONOR—as befits an AVENGER!

Three panels later, the motives of the Enchantress are confided privately to the reader as she "wrestles with her thoughts"—to wit, "I can sense that Hercules feels a spark of WARMTH for the Scarlet Witch! But, though he knows it not, the heart of the ENCHANTRESS is ever his!" Her immediate conclusion: "Therefore, the mortal girl must DIE—by MY HAND!" Of course. What else? Why else but out of envy of the Other Woman (the Enchantress is dressed in green) would she do battle at all? Isn't her every act, like Scarlett O'Hara's in GONE WITH THE WIND, finally motivated by her desire for her man?[7] As for the other Scarlet one, Wanda, her motives may not be as pure as she intimates either—that is, "the HONOR befitting an AVENGER"—for, at the end of the story, after the Good Guys have won and are spinning through the fathomless void that is to bring them back to Earth, Hercules says, "Grasp me TIGHTLY, fair Wanda!" and we overhear again as Wanda **secretly** wonders, "The CONCERN in his voice—is it for an AVENGER, or for the girl he calls WANDA?" When all females present, good and evil, constantly wonder in secret whether the men around really want **them**, surely we have found a comic book fantasy world that is ultimately of the men, by the men, and for the men.

To return, then, to the Valkyrie episode. When the battle between the Supermales and the Superfemales has reached climax point, at the penultimate moment, Valkyrie reveals herself to be...(pause)...none other than THE ENCHANTRESS (bad, remember?) in disguise. No regular Avengers fan should feel surprised (betrayed, yes; surprised, no) to learn that the Valkyrie was a phony all along.

"Valkyrie? VALKYRIE? Do not call me that—not any longer!...The time for pretense is PAST!"

"Something's HAPPENING! She's beginning to CHANGE FORM!"

"Precisely! And now, while a simple SPELL holds you motionless...you shall learn at last that there IS no Valkyrie..but only...THE ENCHANTRESS!"

"FANTASTIC! That immortal is one of the Avengers' oldest, fiercest FOES!"

"But why the DECEPTION? Why the use of WANDA and the others? And where is her former ally THE EXECUTIONER?"

"Hang in there, boy heroes! I got a hunch she's WARMIN' UP to lay that on us."

And of course she does. She recounts how she and the Executioner had been banished together from their native land of Asgard and their powers halved, how the two of them might still have thrived had the Executioner not been lured by another woman to leave her.

"In that hour, that moment...I vowed ALL MALES should one day feel my wrath supreme!...To gain my ends, I disguised myself...and used subtle secret SPELLS to win you four [women] to my cause!...But now, ALL of you have served your purpose...and so must DIE..."

Valkyrie's betrayal here is two-fold. First, she concocted the whole story about her Origin, merely to persuade the female Avengers to join with her—AND YOU ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO DO THAT IN THE COMICS!!! She has betrayed a convention of the form—that is, the form of the comics as "reinvented" by the Marvel people. Naturally, once her calumny is revealed to the Superheroines, they reject her leadership and, thanks to the hex powers of the Scarlet Witch, her spell over all is broken and she is "blasted to atoms" (or so it appears for the time being; like Professor Moriarity in the Sherlock Holmes tales, destroyed villains in these tales keep turning up in later stories, somehow rescued from certain death). Is she rejected by the women because she has so thoroughly conned them? Or because The Enchantress is known to be by definition one of the Bad Guys of the Marvel Age of Comics? The answer is both, of course, but the ambiguous perspective makes it hard to tell what the major motives of the Superheroines might be. There is no doubt, however, in the world of male fantasy, about the motive of The Enchantress herself: jealousy again. All along, it was rejection by a single man—not Hercules this time but the Executioner—that energized her every act. Mere personal revenge inspired by her love for a man, the fundamental female motivation in all-American fiction, once again is the root of all evil.

The second kind of betrayal, clearly, is the implicit suggestion that the claims and cries of women's liberation are also phony. In fact, in the final panel of the story, one of the male Avengers makes the mistake of being explicit about just that:

"Well, at least I'm glad of ONE thing...You birds finally learned your lesson about that WOMEN'S LIB bull!"

But no, that won't do, and Wanda retorts promptly:

"That's what you think—male chauvinist pig! One of these days, the Liberators will stage a comeback—right, Jan?"

"You know, Wanda..." Jan replies, "they just might at that!" Tentative and inconclusive, of course, but still a surprise. Perhaps a small signal that even in the world of comic-book fantasy, in December of 1970, a time when "women's lib" as a movement and "male chauvinist pig" as an epithet were accepted by the American public as colossal jokes, *some* consciousness-rising among the readership was already underway.

What has happened in the Marvel Comics world during the years since the original Valkyrie episode in AVENGERS No. 83 is as fascinating a tale of role reversal as the one I have just recounted, and no less ambiguous. Despite Wanda's prediction, The Liberators have not staged a comeback to date. But Valkyrie has returned—first in an issue of the series THE INCREDIBLE HULK specifically inspired by, and credited to Tom Wolfe's RADICAL CHIC, and then, beginning in February of 1973, in a new Marvel series called THE DEFENDERS. The writers of the series are not the same as those who wrote the original script, and one can trace, issue by issue, a transformation of Valkyrie's character and identity until, by the end of an episode of June, 1973, she is portrayed as the token woman of "The Mightiest NON-TEAM of SUPER-DOERS ever assembled." The other members of the "non-team" called The New Defenders are the Hulk, Silver Surfer, Dr. Strange and the Submariner—Superheroes all. At one moment during the plot, Submariner and Surfer are at the point of quarreling over who is to serve as her mentor in "teaching the maiden" about earthly ways. That is to say, not only has Valkyrie been transformed from one of the Bad Guys (The Enchantress) to one of the Good Guys (a member of the Defenders) in this short period of time—an exercise accomplished through an AMAZING sleight-of-hand-and-pen operation possible only in the fantasy world of comics, and probably only in so audaciously IMPLAUSIBLE a world as Marvel comics—but her personality has been progressively softened to the point that she apologizes to men for her stridency, professes her love for another Superhero (unrequited and quite helpless love, for her Black Knight has been turned to stone by The Enchantress), and has twice seemed on the point of tears in her eagerness to be accepted into her new group. When the Silver Surfer asks of her identity ("And who is the young LADY?"), she retorts:

"Don't call me a LADY,"—but then she adds, "I'm SORRY. That's part of the Enchantress' SPELL talking...You see, I was CREATED by the sorceress by fusing an EXISTING personality—the fiercely LIBERATED Valkyrie—with the personality of a LIVING woman." She goes on: "The VALKYRIE side of me is the STRONGEST—which makes it HARD, because she has only lived BRIEFLY before. I feel as if I'm newly BORN—while still being fully GROWN."[8]

Whatever that means. Her costume is the same, she is still captioned the "Vengeful Valkyrie" from time to time, but by now she no longer calls anybody "Male Chauvinist Pig," and in fact, she is so completely the Token Woman in the group herself that she scarcely seems capable of serving as leader of any group of female Liberators anywhere—at least, not at this point in her history.

Meanwhile, the battle of the sexes seems to have been transferred to another arena in the Marvel circus—the comparatively domesticated world of the Fantastic Four. Here, the unthinkable has happened—Sue Storm Richards has walked out on her husband Reed, taking their child Franklin with her, and the Famous FF are threatened with dissolution as a group. (As this article is being written, Medusa is pinch-hitting for Sue but merely on a temporary basis to keep the F4 a team "until" Sue returns.) The possibility of divorce between the most famous married pair in modern comicdom had been impending for some time before the crucial moment when, upon the successful conclusion of a battle against common enemies, during which Reed attempted to *order* Sue to take his child and get out of harm's way, the time arrived for self-congratulation:

"We made a fine fighting foursome, did we not—...?"

"And we'd have done EQUALLY well, I'm sure—" nags leader Reed, looking at Sue holding their son in her arms, "WITHOUT the help of a woman who can't put FIRST things FIRST."

"If you mean ME, Reed—" Sue retorts, "then you've had YOUR say—now I'll have MINE—! I love our son as much as YOU do—as much as anyone COULD...But, in the heat of battle, you didn't think of me as a member of the TEAM—only as the 'MOTHER OF YOUR CHILD'!...—and I'm LEAVING! Leaving YOU—leaving the F.F.!"

"GOOD!" is Reed's cruel reply, "At least THAT way, our son will get a little ATTENTION!"

"Very well then. I'm GOING," Sue repeats. "But...I want you to KNOW, Reed, that—"

She is not allowed to finish her sentence. "Don't TALK it to death, lady. If you're GOING to go...then GO!" says Reed.

And the narrative filling corners and center of the next panel, in which the two are seen with backs to each other, catching their final glimpses as they part, is important:

"The words have been BITTER...the accents HARSH. Still, there is no anger now in the faces of these two who move slowly, haltingly away from each other...There is only...something indescribably SAD." And in the far corner, the stern line: "Yet move apart they DO."

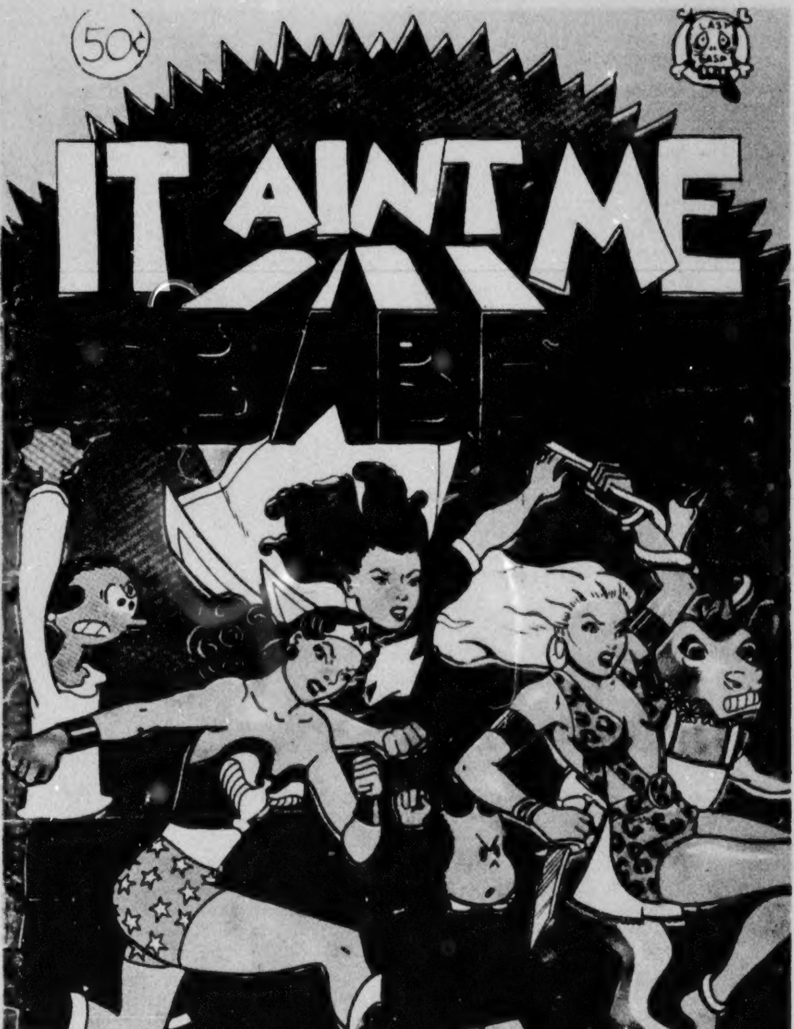
Move apart they do: there is something irrevocable in the line, a finality that continues through successive FF episodes even when, at the end of the issue two months later (March, 1973), Reed Richards is pleased to have the Medusa replace Sue and Sue's brother return to make possible the continuing existence of the Fantastic Four: "Reed Richards smiles, and tries not to think of

SUE...the woman he LOVES...the woman who took his CHILD, and walked out of his life."

If the socially-conscious Marvel staff has been keeping up with trends among newly separated or divorced couples (as reported, for example, in the January, 1973 issue of MS magazine or the February, 1973 issue of NEWSWEEK), could not the next step in the story line be Reed's acceptance of custody of the child in order that he might enjoy the joys and responsiblities of parenthood and at the same time free Sue Storm, whose superpowers have all along been equal to his own, to replace him (temporarily) in the team of the Fantastic Four? Since I am still assuming the proposition that when comic characters speak and act, a part of their culture speaks and acts with them, such an eventuality would seem to me as important a moment in popular culture history as the one that allowed Al Capp's Daisy Mae, after all those years of unsuccessful Sadie Hawkins Day races, to catch and marry up with L'il Abner. As one moment signalized the triumph of the Feminine Mystique in the world of popular comics by the 1950s, so the later moment would mark the acceptance of new patterns of liberation in that world during the 1970s.

That is to say, I believe the future fate of the comparatively Americanized and domesticated foursome of Marvel comics known as the Fantastic Four will be as important, if not more important, as an index to the impact on American culture of the woman's movement as the fate of Valkyrie, whose language seemed so threatening on the cover of AVENGERS No. 83. Consider what has happened in subsequent issues, and compare the trends to what has actually happened in American life: Valkyrie herself has been transformed from an isolated figure, threatening and essentially dishonest, into some kind of "confused" individual seeking friendship through participation in a team (The New Defenders). She is now an existential heroine seeking, like Silver Surfer, to subdue the impulses within the self that cut her off from humankind, a mixture of the "liberationist" ideologue the Enchantress originally created and the "libing women" whose body she acquired in a later episode, a transformation away from her original appearance as the Evil Woman stereotype, the hostile outside agitator, the deceitful Witch-cum-Enchantress. Sue Storm, on the other hand, is a representative of the Fair Maiden stereotype, a one hundred percent Americanized insider whose husband and brother (also dressed in blue) are also members of the FF, a blonde, blue-eyed, innocent and true, loving wife and mother whose devotion to duty following the lines of Barbara Welter's Cult of True Womanhood and Betty Friedan's Feminine Mystique) was to last till death did them part. Yet here she is, like so many modern American women heretofore regarded as permanently attached to their mates and children, making the gesture toward liberation in a world entirely different from Valkyrie's world. She is breaking *free* from precisely the sort of security in a group that Valkyrie is now seeking.[9] In a sense, then, the two "opposite" stereotypes seem to be moving toward each other.

The present state of ambiguity in which both the Valkyrie and Sue Storm find themselves, after each has undergone a partial transformation, confronts the inventive Stan Lee, who has now become general producer of the entire Marvel Comics group, with a dilemma—but a dilemma he and his writers will likely enjoy resolving with the same cheekiness they have displayed to date. What if, for example, in some future Marvel issue called THE NEW LIBERATORS a group of Superheroines *did* "stage a comback," as the Wasp and Scarlet Witch predicted they would at the end of our original tale? Assuming that Marvel's inclination to reflect cultural attitudes in its fantasies will continue in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LAST GASP
IT AINT ME BABE

Figure 13: *IT AIN'T ME BABE COMICS* cover (Last Gasp Eco-Funnies)

its present vein, could we not expect that this time they are likely to assemble with their Superhero allies at their side, their enemies clearly labelled the Bad Guys in some new KING-SIZED SPECIAL, their leader a GENUINE sincere Superheroine with an Authentic Origin? **Question:** Would the transformed Sue Storm or the transformed Valkyrie be a better candidate for this new Liberationist leader? In either case, I suspect, Stan Lee will find a way to say I told you so. In one of the early panels in the strip, possibly at the point when the Wasp and Scarlet Witch join the assemblage with one of them saying something like, "It has been some time since last we agreed to battle side by side for THIS GREAT CAUSE—," an asterisk will appear (*) to carry our eye to the footnote in the corner of the panel where it says: "See end of episode in Avengers ish No. 83—**Prophetic** Stan."

II: FEMALE FANTASIES ABOUT WOMEN'S LIBERATION

What might be called a counter-fantasy deliberately designed to refute the treatment women characters have received in the more familiar comic strips may be identified in such new publications as the one put out by a company that calls itself Last Gasp Eco-Funnies—a name which itself places the authors in the post-Robert Crumb era, where protest against a world going mad has reached a kind of black-humorist mood of desperation. To illustrate the counter-fantasies, I am using the cover (*Figure 13*) and a set of panels)*Figure 14*) from a publication whose title, taken from a Bob Dylan song, is itself designed to be a retort: IT AIN'T ME BABE (and in general, retorts to the character in Dylan's song and all the men he presumes to speak for, "It ain't me, babe, it ain't me you're looking for, babe"). Unlike MS. MAGAZINE, which also carried a picture of Wonder Woman on the cover many months later, IT AIN'T ME BABE did not use (or acknowledge permission for) the original portraits of the comic characters but rather reproduced them free-hand, copied them, imitated them (the word "plagiarized" simply does not fit), giving credit for the "art work" to the person who did the copying from the originals. Thus there is nothing ambiguous about the parody intended here—heavy-handed maybe, crudely drawn undoubtedly, but the *intent* is perfectly clear.

In the cover portrait,[10] we see familiar comic-strip characters marching in anger under the banner that presumably speaks for them all, their clenched-fist determination vaguely promising some sort of "answer" that the contents of the book might be assumed to deliver. We are not here dealing with a mass-market audience but with a group of authors and editors who feel strongly that they have something to say and wish to persuade the Eco-Funnies publisher (who happens to be male) that they should say it in their own way. But who are these figures marching across the page? Of all "people," Claribel the Cow, followed by Jane ("Me Tarzan, You Jane") in leopard skins, then Little Lulu, Wonder Woman, and Popeye's Olive Oyl. In this case, I think we might say the cover projects the assumption of insiders of the women's liberation movement that The Rage of Women will inevitably rise in every age, type, and species of Woman as soon as she learns how completely she has been conned, betrayed, victimized, manipulated—for example, into wearing a costume and personality and behavior pattern in the plots of stories that is often something less than fully and "normally" human. Once she finds this out, liberationists feel, she will experience the "conversion moment" so many women report having had in recent years (I myself am no exception; see my chapter, "Some Room of My Own," in Volume One); enthusiasm over their own personal discovery may then lead them to insist that a similar conversion can occur in every other woman, real or fictional. Once that light dawns, she will decide it is time—and here I am using actual titles of magazines, articles, and comic books—to begin "breaking out," "moving out," coming "up from under," declaring "no more fun and games"; it's the "turn of the screwed," as they say "goodbye to all that."

Indeed, in the comic-strip story called "Breaking Out," one of the several different approaches to the theme of women's liberation represented by the quite varied entries in the IT AIN'T ME BABE collection, the counter-fantasy reaches what, to me, may be its most shockingly ecstatic moment to date. That moment, the story told and how it ends, and the cast of characters involved, in fact, will supply sufficient material to counterpose against the characters and plot of the male fantasy in Avengers No. 83 to illustrate how some of the major themes of the women's movement in America are reflected in, *and* illuminated by, the comics. In *Figure 14,* the reader will find four strips from the story. (Again, the characters are "copied" from actual strips, the "art work" credited in the upper right-hand corner to the member of the staff who accomplished the visual parody. While I am inclined to call attention to the awkwardness in skill as compared to Walt Disney or Marvel staff work, I would by no means care to apologize for it—it seems to me to be part of the story I am telling, an illustration of what Robert Scarola has called "the politics of style.")

In each of the first three strips of the story, a character from a familiar syndicated comic strip—"Little Lulu," "The Heart of Juliet Jones," and "Archie," respectively—suddenly arrives at a Moment of Recognition and "breaks out" of the comic strip role she has been playing and accepting for years. Surely the funniest is the first of these—who would have thought to see those words coming from Little Lulu's mouth? The sheer effrontry of it succeeds as shock, I think, a shock not only to our expectations of the character as we have known her all these years (here the violation of the expected is not unlike Stan Lee's habit of stepping in and out of his stories as irreverently as he pleases), but ultimately a shock to the still-surviving remnants of the Genteel Tradition, which does not admit that such young children, especially girl children, are capable of thinking (much less speaking) in such language. That is why I call this panel in the first strip the most shockingly ecstatic moment, in counter-fantasy form, to illustrate the current state of analysis in the women's movement; the title used for a bibliography of recommended non-sexist books put out by Feminists on Children's Media, LITTLE MISS MUFFET FIGHTS BACK, conveys the same idea well—but Little Lulu, I think, is funnier. She too is going to fight back, we assume, but it is the male children in the strip itself, Tubby and Iggy, whose rejection of her as a girl cause her to experience her conversion moment and who will presumably be the targets of her new-found rage.

In the second strip, Juliet Jones does not turn against the man her "heart" is drawn toward this time, but against the creator of the comic strip who gave her words (and role, and personality) to suit her romances. This is a further step in "breaking out," or at least a different kind of step, and the same difference—between attacking male *characters* for chauvinism, neglect or whatever, and attacking the *creators* behind the scenes—may be found in all other arts, high art and popular art, including the novel, film, television, painting, and other forms of fiction.

In the third strip, one of Archie's forever-competing girlfriends—Veronica and Betty—achieves her conversion moment not so much by responding *either*

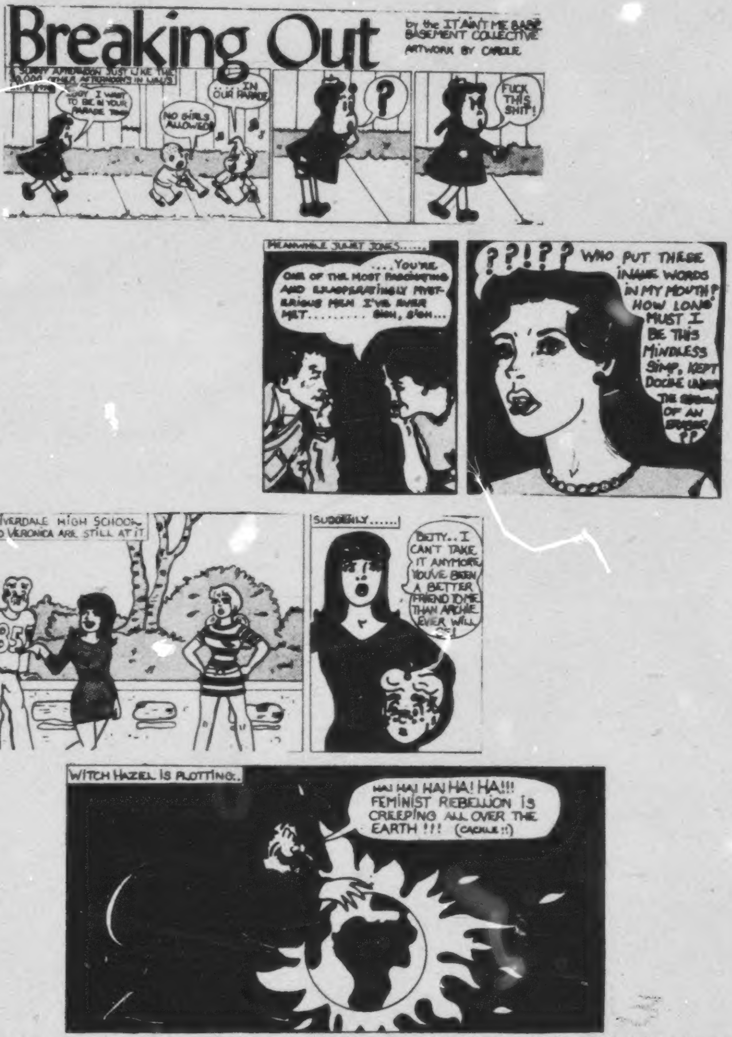

Breaking Out
by the IT AIN'T ME BABE BASEMENT COLLECTIVE
ARTWORK BY CAROLE
...I WANT TO BE IN YOUR PARADE TOO!
NO GIRLS ALLOWED!
.....IN OUR PARADE
?
FUCK THIS SHIT!
MEANWHILE JULIET JONES......
....YOU'RE ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING AND EXASPERATINGLY MYSTERIOUS MEN I'VE EVER MET.......... SIGH, SIGH...
??!?? WHO PUT THESE INANE WORDS IN MY MOUTH?! HOW LONG MUST I BE THIS MINDLESS SIMP, KEPT DOCILE UNDER THE ... OF AN ...??
AND AT RIVERDALE HIGH SCHOOL BETTY AND VERONICA ARE STILL AT IT.
SUDDENLY......
BETTY.. I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE. YOU'VE BEEN A BETTER FRIEND TO ME THAN ARCHIE EVER WILL BE!
WITCH HAZEL IS PLOTTING..
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!!! FEMINIST REBELLION IS CREEPING ALL OVER THE EARTH !!! (CACKLE!!)

Figure 14: Breaking Out, three strips from IT AIN'T ME BABE COMICS. (Last Gasp Eco-Funnies)

to the male character or the male creator (although both are implicitly blamed and both will presumably become targets for rage) but quite on her own—and this too is a phase of the current movement that is accurately projected here in fantasy form: the arrival of Recognition without any active involvement in the process by men at all. To ignore the men entirely, in fiction or in real life, may be the ultimate insult (an ultimate male fear?), but to a noticeable degree, the women's movement does seem headed in such directions at present—not for the negative purpose of rejecting the Archies but for the positive purpose of uniting the Bettys and Veronicas in sisterhood. And indeed, by the end of the third strip, Veronica's conversion moment does seem to have brought her to the threshold of such an alliance. Thus, in the classic "triangle" of affection, here and in the other media, we now have a new possibility for resolution of the plot: sisterhood triumphant at the end, with the man rather than the Other Woman left out in the cold.

But what of Witch Hazel, the hag complete with wart on nose who shows up in the story three strips later (after two more moments of conversion, for Petunia Pig and Supergirl, similar to the three I have discussed)? Who is Witch Hazel and what is her role in the unfolding plot supposed to mean? In appearance, she would certainly not qualify as a candidate for the pages of "witch" heroine portraits that Marvel Comics proudly presents to its readers from time to time (for instance, one such page includes Scarlet Witch, the Black Widow, and the Wasp and is labelled "Pulsatin' Panoramic Pulchritudinous Pin-up Department"), nor is she as attractive as such Evil Women as the Enchantress and Queen of the Norns among Marvel's characters. She does bear a striking resemblance to Marvel's Haag, who is also evil and who advises and abets the Queen of the Norns in her scheming to win the heart of Thor (in the Marvel versions of the Norse legends); that is to say, the hag figure in both male and female fantasy worlds is presumed to possess a mysterious capacity for manipulation and control of human behavior (cf. voodoo, conjure women, etc.), as implied in the word witch. But what is such a Cosmic Plotter doing here, in a women's liberationist comic book? Is it not an insult to Lulu, Juliet, Veronica, Petunia, Supergirl and the rest of us to imply that we could not arrive at recognition on our own but required some kind of outside agent, that our recognition was instigated by some old and ugly cackling Haag (who probably got that way due to unrequited love) with some ulterior motive of her own (power over the earth, as usual among the Evil Ones in the comics)? Doesn't the presence of Witch Hazel only confirm the worst stereotypes in the minds of opponents of women's lib?

But it is just here that the counter-fantasy comes in. One must learn to "read" the new language of the insiders among the liberationists to understand, and here again, the appeal to an "inside circle" of comics readers suggests comparison to the "reinvented" Marvel comics, which appeal to a new generation in its own kind of language. In the present instance, one must know that in the newer fantasies, witches and sisterhood are by no means incompatible. At least since the time of the formation of the much-publicized extremist group that chose to call itself W.I.T.C.H. (Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell) and the publication of Joreen's BITCH MANIFESTO there has been in the women's movement not only a willingness (but often, eagerness) to embrace in sisterhood the types that have heretofore been labelled witches, bitches, old hags, shrews, and sphinxes—presumably by the male-dominated culture. Among the characters in the other stories appearing in the same book, for instance, are an "old woman of Telluria" (with special powers and pendulous breasts), a beneficent ruler (also of that Paradise called Telluria) called The Great Mother and a female sky-god whose face lights up the heavens when it suddenly appears in the legend of Oma, in which a bird (the Holy Ghost?) Oma has rescued flies sky-ward as the God tells Oma to ride to her reward. But my favorite in the comic book is a kinky sphinx named Natasha (which seems to be a favorite name for alienated non-American types) who comes to visit the woman Lavender and happens to be on hand to save for her "THE BOOK OF ALL THINGS To Gain Mastery of the World" just when the lover Rohan comes to steal it while making love to Lavender. On returning the book, after Rohan has left, Natasha the Sphinx says, "We women must stick together...Besides, I can't read."

Thus we should not be too surprised to come upon Witch Hazel in the story, "Breaking Out," since she is clearly a good inspirational figure possessed of special insight and powers, the kind of stereotype that is a staple in comics, especially in science fiction. This is the Teresias figure ("old man with wrinkled dugs") who see all and presides over all, a cosmic consciousness in comic book form, the only difference being that this time the super-human "father-figure" is a woman. (Teresias was supposed to be of both sexes equally but is always called a "he," I notice, in Eliot criticism.) The fact that Witch Hazel cackles all the while the conversion experiences she has witnessed are followed, in the succeeding panels, by the discovery of sisterhood at consciousness-raising sessions does suggest her perverse enjoyment of a spectacle, which would seem to make her something less than a benevolent super-power. But the cackling is less important (except for just that purpose), it seems to me, than the narrative she provides (I assume it must be her speaking) to accompany these panels. "Uprooted sisters gather together," the first caption reads, and then, "into small groups not unlike witch covens of old." Here we see the women and girls sitting together at a sensitivity session, with Supergirl confessing to Archie's best pal, "Betty, I didn't think I could talk this openly to another person." The next caption concludes, "Shared tales of outrage produce a burning reaction," which is followed by: "And now the action begins...." Whereupon, for the last few panels of the story, we see Veronica and Betty picketing for courses in karate and women's history at a local high school, Petunia walking out on Porky Pig, Juliet Jones inviting a sister to take acid with her and commune with the moon (THE MOON!!), Supergirl freeing women prisoners from the jails, and—in the final panel—Lulu's last revenge: she is drawn as a giant-sized figure with a wicked grin sitting alone within a clubhouse bearing the sign, NO BOYS ALLOWED. Outside the house cower the perplexed and dwarfed figures of Tubby and Iggy, Archie and Jughead.

If we compare this ending to the Avengers cover we began with, we will now have come full circle. On the Avengers cover, Valkyrie triumphs over Goliath, and all the men look dead. "Say it isn't so," cries the male purchaser of the issue—and sure enough, it isn't. From within comes reassurance that the whole thing was a hoax—the men just *look* dead but they aren't, and the Valkyrie is a bona fide phony. In the female counter-fantasy, all the comic characters rise up in rage when they recognize the roles they have been forced to play; Valkyrie is replaced by Witch Hazel as the agent manipulating the rest of the women with her special supernatural powers, but this time, the manipulator wins. In actuality, this is a political fable cast in comic book form, an outline of the stages involved for women to free themselves from their inferior roles in the culture, but at the very end, the political tract gives way to an antic impulse as Little Lulu appears again (the authors must have a soft spot for her) to act out for all their "happy ending." While I myself cannot see female readers responding with any great satisfaction to the "resolution" the ending symbolizes (I suspect the authors actually didn't know how to wrap up their tale and leaned on the visual pun as pretext), I still find it striking that their "happy ending" is so similar to the "unhappy ending" used on the Avengers cover to frighten readers into buying the issue. In both cases, the women are triumphant over cowering or defeated men. Perhaps in the Final Fantasy of some Marvelous (Marvel-ous?) liberationist's KING-SIZED SPECIAL yet to come, Little Lulu will inherit Hawkeye's growth serum and turn out to be the New NEW *NEW* Goliath, the footnote in the corner explaining that Witch Hazel was really Tiny Alice all along and that Professor Moriarty is still not dead.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER NINE

1. MALE FANTASIES ABOUT WOMEN'S LIBERATION

[1] The cover of AVENGERS issue No. 83 is reprinted with permission of the Marvel Comics Group, granted in a letter to Betty Chmaj dated September 15, 1971, copyright 1970 by Marvel Comics, Inc., Marvel Comics Group.

2 Leslie Fiedler, "The Comics: The Middle Against Both Ends," which first appeared in his NO! IN THUNDER, was revised with an afterword added for publication in James B. Hall and Barry Ulanov, eds., MODERN CULTURE AND THE ARTS (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), pp. 526-7.

3 Fiedler, 1967 Afterword, in Hall and Ulanov, pp. 526-7.

4 The origins and traits of the Marvel Superheroines are enough for several separate essays in themselves. In brief, the Wasp, who has the power to shrink at will, sprouting wings as she does so, was one of the first Avengers, and in "real" life is Janet Van Dyne, **heiress** to a fortune. Scarlet Witch, who is possessed of hex power, appeared as an **orphan mutant** as did her brother Pietro (Quicksilver), who is possessed of the power of speed. The Black Widow in "real" life is the alienated **alien** Natasha Romanoff who came to this country, of course, from Russia; she has stingers for her weapons, wears black garb (costume recently updated) and lives in loneliness with the knowledge that she is possessed of a curse that causes any man she loves to die. Medusa is one of a Marvel group called "The Inhumans," an **unearthly** race, who can change the genetic patterns of their babies to suit any need; Medusa herself has "living Hair" as her weapon. Note that all four are in some way misfits or exceptions, cut off from common American experience, from family and society. In this they contrast sharply to the missing member, Sue Storm, one of the Fantastic Four and the only Marvel heroine to marry a Superhero, Reed Richards, leader of the group. Sue's brother is a third member of the famous F.F., the fourth being an unlikely (comic-relief?) character known as The Thing. More about Sue and the FF later in the essay.

5 Again, the origins are fascinating in terms of American traditions of fiction, since the New Goliath, formerly known as Hawkeye, took on the growth serum of the Old Goliath (Hank Pym) and a new costume, thus translating an old myth to a new time. My authority for the origins and history of these characters is my twelve-year-old son, an avid Marvel collector, and I am pleased to acknowledge here the important contribution to this essay of John Stefan Chmaj.

6 On the same page, to illustrate how the Marvelites toss off overdone prose, the acknowledgement of authorship appears as follows in the bottom corner: "Stan Lee lovingly lords it over a Roy Thomas-Don Heck in a landmark of literary luminescence!...and now, turn the page, hallowed one,—and let the once-a-year WONDERMENT commence—!"

7 See Joseph Baunoch's essay on Scarlett O'Hara and Blanche DuBois in Part

111. The complex combination of "bad" enchantress and "good" defender of a Way of Life might fit Scarlett as well as the comics characters.

8 DEFENDERS, vol. 1, no. 6 (June, 1973), p. 11. The Silver Surfer's response to this "explanation" is interesting: "Yes. I KNOW that feeling. I MYSELF was changed from an ADULT MAN into this metallic WANDERER so different from ANYTHING I had experienced. It makes you feel very SMALL." He then invites her to join him in his plan to "fly across the world—OBSERVING it, basking in the sheer number of PEOPLE on it." She replies, "I'd LOVE it!" and the two have a date. The sympathetic resonance between the two suggests intriguing parallels with trends in other areas of American culture, given the Silver Surfer's propensity to brood over his isolation from the general run of humankind and his very appearance, a unisex image (asexual; eunuch-like and robot-like) combining features of the streamlined Academy Awards Oscar, Mr. Clean and Ernest Trova's famous icon deliberately named "Falling Man." Whether contemporary isolates who identify with the strangeness and smallness experienced by the Valkyries and the Surfers and the Falling Men of the modern world are in fact "desexed" is open to question; an alternate argument might be that they point the way toward a utopian "androgynous" society.

9 I should acknowledge, of course, the importance of change in the Marvel staff (editors, writers, artists) as these affect the story line. The personal lives and personal opinions of the new writers (especially Steve Englehart and Roy Thomas) might well help to explain the changes in attitudes toward sexual alliances and women's liberation. But such changes in writers' and editors' attitudes would themselves be reflections of the changing culture. Moreover, the opinions of the readership are bound to limit or influence degree and directions of change, a fact that is interestingly reflected in the Letters columns of the various issues.

One of my favorites among letters appearing in this sequence of FANTASTIC FOUR issues is from a fan who draws a parallel between the Beatles and the F.F. as the perfect groups for the 1960s whose time has passed them by:

> Like the Beatles, the FF revolutionized their field by getting the products back into the hands of the artists. Like the Beatles, the FF was made of four strong personalities that worked as a single unit. Like the Beatles, the FF took abuse from the public while having a hard core of true fans....
>
> Lee/Kirby [Stan Lee, writer, and Jack Kirby, artist] were like Lennon/McCartney. They just didn't miss. They produced classic after classic. They kept ahead of everyone for years, until all the other companies were blatantly copying from them. The Fantastic Four were the good-time humor, the togetherness, the anti-superheroness, the prohumanity, and the painful self-awareness of the sixties.
>
> The sixties are over—and the Beatles have broken up—and Lee/Kirby are no more. I know that it's a big step to take, but the FF must dissolve. Sad though it may be, my friends, all things must pass. So rather than let the FF die the slow death of stagnation, I suggest they split, like the Beatles, unequivocably.
>
> —Allan Moniz, FANTASTIC FOUR,
> vol. 1, no. 132 (March 1973),
> p. 31.

Other issues of FANTASTIC FOUR cited in the text are vol. 1, no. 129 (December 1972), and vol. 1, no. 130 (January 1973).

II. FEMALE FANTASIES ABOUT WOMEN'S LIBERATION

10 The cover and graphics from IT AIN'T ME BABE are reprinted here with the permission of Ron Turner, publisher of Last Gasp Eco-Funnies, granted in a letter to Betty Chmaj, June, 1972.

11 For a discussion of the literary treatment of one of these types of social creep, refer to "Will The Real Great American Bitch Please Stand Up?" in Part 111 of this volume. For a full discussion of the view of women as the first deities and first in the eyes of humankind prior to the "patriarchal revolution," see Elizabeth Gould Davis, THE FIRST SEX (Baltimore: G. P. Putnam, 1971). In her survey of types, Davis deals with goddesses, queens, witches, Blessed Ladies, Great Mothers and others. There are many works on withches and whitchcraft that may be pertinent (e.g. Chadwick Hansen, WITCHCRAFT AT SALEM).

12 *Editor's Note:* While the day of the liberationists' Final Fantasy has yet to arrive, new rumblings are to be heard from the group that brought us IT AIN'T ME BABE. In his letter of permission, brother Ron Turner reports: "...The IT AIN'T ME BABE newspaper folded long ago...Trina, who was the moving force behind BABE went on to draw ALL GIRL THRILLS and has a new book almost ready with a Black woman superheroine called the Fox...Michelle Brand is now doing a twice weekly strip in the GOOD TIMES NEWSPAPER starring a female gorilla who likes to chase men and seduce male hunters..." If that female gorrilla and the Fox get together for the Final Fantasy KING-SIZED SPECIAL, next time the footnote might be signed "Stan Lee, up a tree."—JG

CHAPTER TEN

Images of Women in 19th Century American Painting: Learning to See Anew

BETTY E. CHMAJ

John I.H. Baur, art historian, looks at a portrait of an American by Thomas Eakins and finds evidence of a "twilight mood" that had befallen American art, he feels, by the turn of the century. Fairfield Porter looks at the same Eakins portrait and finds evidence rather of "the weariness of holding still" (a reference to the heavy demands the artist made upon his sitters) and of "the tribute paid to his conscience for the enjoyment of painting" (a reference to Eakins' uneasiness, Porter feels, over his decision to forego surgery for art as a career).[1] It does not seem to have occurred to either of these critics, or to many others, to notice that the "defeated look" in the eyes of Eakins' subjects appears far more often when they are women, or that the haunted stare might be saying less about the *Zeitgeist*, about the artist's techniques, or about Eakins' private motivations than it says about the life of these subjects themselves. It seems obvious today to anyone who surveys a series of such portraits that the fixed, lonely look in one after another of Eakins' women has something to say about the defeated lives of American women late in the nineteenth century, a time when they were under pressure to conform to a code and a stereotype powerfully enforced by the culture.

It is this subject, "the pressure of the ideal," that Joy S. Kasson takes up in her essay on images of women in nineteenth century American art. She is concerned both with the pressure upon the women of the age to live up to the "ideal" and the response to that same pressure by the artists and writers who painted the portraits of these women. Kasson's central thesis is that the change in the image of women from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century to be found in American art, reflects the decline of the actual status of women during this period of time. In this respect, her findings confirm and illustrate nicely the thesis advanced by Joan Hoff Wilson in Chapter Three, "Woman as a Declining Force in American History."

Other parallels and comparisons from Kasson's essay suggest themselves. The "etherealization" of the nude in painting and sculpture to the point of unreality can be compared to the ethereal, vaporized, unreal, often actually **deceased** women idealized and worshiped from safe distance in the poetry of Edgar Allen Poe (Lenore, Helen, Annabel Lee), the lyrics of Stephen Foster ("Beautiful Dreamer," "Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming," "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair") and, on occasion, the paintings of Washington Allston. The connection to the poetry of Twain's Emmaline Grangerford is obvious.

Also **partly** etherealized, desexualized, is the Young American Girl who shows up in the early work of Winslow Homer, who is, as Lloyd Goodrich has pointed out, the same fair maiden made famous in the novels of Henry James. A comment by Leslie Fiedler on James is in point, comparing the two types of etherealization: "The same readers who were neither dismayed nor titillated by James' later conversion, via a 'ghost story'...of the Pale Maiden to a ghost bought, eagerly read, and horrifiedly attacked James' portrait of the American Girl in DAISY MILLER." Fiedler is arguing that it is "only when the stereotype of the Good Good Girl is challenged in 'realistic' fiction, in novels which eschew the camouflage of gothicism and allegory, that the great audience is disturbed."[2] From the evidence Kasson presents, it would seem a similar argument could be advanced about the great audience for American art.

The difference in the treatment of women by Homer and Eakins, usually paired as the century's great "objective realists," is striking. After seeing and painting the black women of the American South and the fisherwomen of Tynemouth, England, Homer ceased entirely to deal with the young American maiden types who appeared in his earlier work—and, in fact, avoided women entirely thereafter. Recalling Homer's retreat to the Maine coast, one thinks again of Fiedler's analysis of American literature and his conclusion that awareness of the inadequacy of the female characters they had created in their works "led many of our authors to that strategy of evasion, that flight from society to nature, from the world of women to the haunts of womanless men, which sets our novel apart from that of the rest of the Western world" (Fiedler, pp. 58-9). Eakins' insight into the truth of the lives of American women, by contrast, is remarkable. A body of recent research supports with chilling accuracy the conclusions Kasson aptly draws from her "reading" of the features and postures of these women—research on nineteenth century medical and biological views of women, on physician-patient relationships involving women, and on the treatment of hysteria in women, which Carroll Smith-Rosenberg identifies as "a protean ailment" that was "one of the classic diseases of the nineteenth century."[3]

The two essays in this volume on images of women in American painting—Kasson's essay in this chapter and my own essay (with Kathy Plummer and Arlene Mendez) in the next chapter—may well find some readers eager to disagree with everything from a particular interpretation of a particular work or artist, to the entire approach to the subject these essays assume. Such disagreements are often aroused by interpretations in the visual arts, where passions for distinct points of view seem to me especially intense, and where little sympathy is displayed toward those unaccustomed to the language of the arts as compared to the language of sociology. For the sake of any who might profit by such a reminder, therefore, it seems appropriate here to issue the usual disclaimer: the intent is not to refute and reject all former interpretations of these works of art but rather to urge readers and viewers to see them in new ways.

The image of woman in nineteenth century America, as she existed in cultural stereotype, is becoming all too clear: delicate, pampered, modest, she occupied a sphere removed from the rough-and-tumble of a man's world, a sphere which was, nonetheless, infinitely more elevated morally and intellectually than the sordid world of everyday affairs.[1] As one nineteenth century writer put it, woman's "inferior strength and sedentary habits confine her within the domestic circle; she is kept aloof from the bustle and storm of active life;...timidity and modesty are her attributes....She must rely upon the strength of others; man must be engaged in her cause."[2] This cause was one of virtue and uplift, as another writer testified: "Her life was one long act of devotion,—devotion to God, devotion to her husband, devotion to her children, devotion to her servants, to the poor, to humanity. Nothing happen-

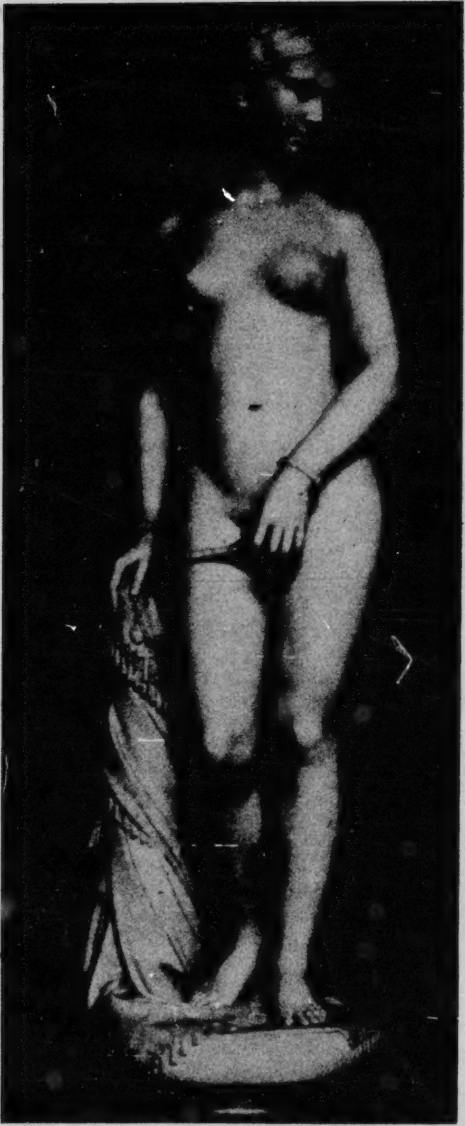


Figure 15: The Greek Slave, by Hiram Powers. (1869; marble, height 66 inches) Courtesy of The Brooklyn Museum. Gift of Mr. Charles F. Bond

ed within the range of her knowledge that her sympathy did not reach and her charity and wisdom did not ameliorate."[3] But, in the conventional view of women, there was no doubt in anyone's mind *where* this influence was to be exerted: "*Society* is her empire, which she governs almost at will....It is her province to *adorn* social life, to throw a *charm* over the intercourse of the world, by making it lovely and attractive, pure and improving."[4] This was the idealized nineteenth century American woman, as high upon a pedestal as she would ever be.

Yet nineteenth century America was indeed, as one European visitor wrote, a "land of contrasts." At the same time that society seemed to dictate for American woman a sharply defined role, some Americans were dissenting vigorously from this definition. Margaret Fuller proclaimed a new dawning of woman's powers in WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY while the Grimke sisters of Charleston campaigned for the emancipation of women and slaves; in 1855 Henry Blackwell and Lucy Stone signed their famous egalitarian marriage contract, and soon Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were making women's rights speeches all across the country. Such activism contrasted sharply, however, with the sentimental, idealized image of women that prevailed in most American parlors, where women laced their stays tighter and modestly covered the "limbs" of their pianos with drapery.

The disparity between the widely-accepted feminine ideal and the growing sense of dissatisfaction with this role was remarked by James Muirhead, a Scotsman who came to America in 1890 to write a Baedecker guide to the United States. "If there is anything the Americans pride themselves on—and justly," Muirhead observed, "it is their handsome treatment of women. You will not meet five Americans without hearing ten times that a lone woman can traverse the length and breadth of the United States without fear of insult; every traveler reports that the United States is the Paradise of women....Man meekly submits to be the hewer of wood, the drawer of water, and the beast of burden for the superior sex. But," he went on to add, "even this gorgeous medal has its reverse side."[5]

The other side was spelled out with even greater force by another travelers' guide to the United States, Francis and Theresa Pulszky's WHITE RED BLACK. "I see, " says the narrator of the guide to a self-proclaimed indulgent husband, "you are almost as courteous as the Turks, who allow their wives every amusement in their harems. The elegantly gilded parlors of your hotels, where the ladies meet to rock away time in the easy rocking chairs, are admirable harems."[6] Earlier in the century, Harriet Martineau had put it even more acidly: "Indulgence is given [the American women] as a substitute for justice."[7] The so-called "superior sex" were for a good part of the nineteenth century legal non-persons, unable to hold property, claim custody of their children, inherit independent wealth, or even sign their own wills. It was this gulf between the popular idealization of women and an often harsh reality which Sojourner Truth had evoked so movingly in her famous "ain't I a woman" speech in 1851.

This gulf, this sense of contradiction, haunted American attitudes toward women throughout the nineteenth century. This essay will explore some of the ways in which social contradictions were amplified and expressed through the treatment of women in painting and literature. It will focus mainly on the "high culture," the genteel society which adopted so thoroughly the myth of woman's ideal nature; yet the frustrations and limitations generated there affected other social realms as well, and have continued to plague women in all walks of life into the twentieth century.

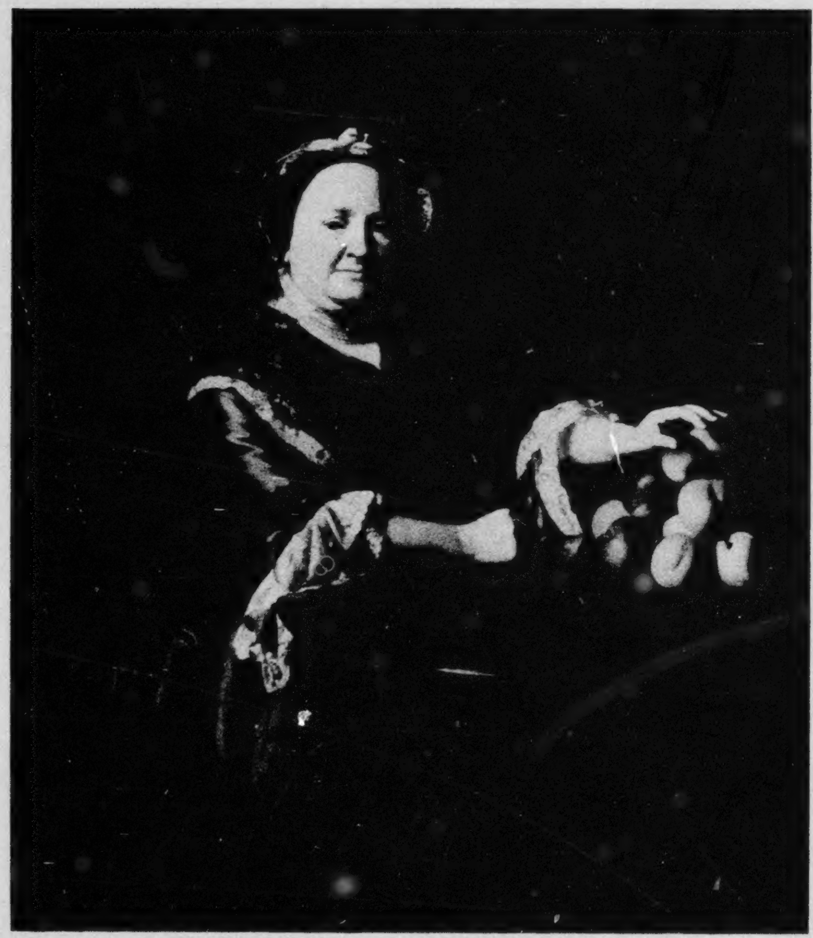


Figure 16: Mrs. Ezekiel Goldthwait, by John Singleton Copely. (1771) Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Bequest of John T. Bowen in memory of Eliza M. Bowen.

To begin the comparisons with a glance backward, most historians acknowledge that the status of women in America actually declined between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One way to measure this change, to get a sense of the increasingly precarious position of women in the nineteenth century, is to examine portraits of women painted over the course of the century. Naturally, a portrait represents some sort of balance between the sitter's self-image and the painter's vision; yet in this balance, their shared assumptions about the way this particular person did or should look, we can find an indication of changing attitudes toward women.

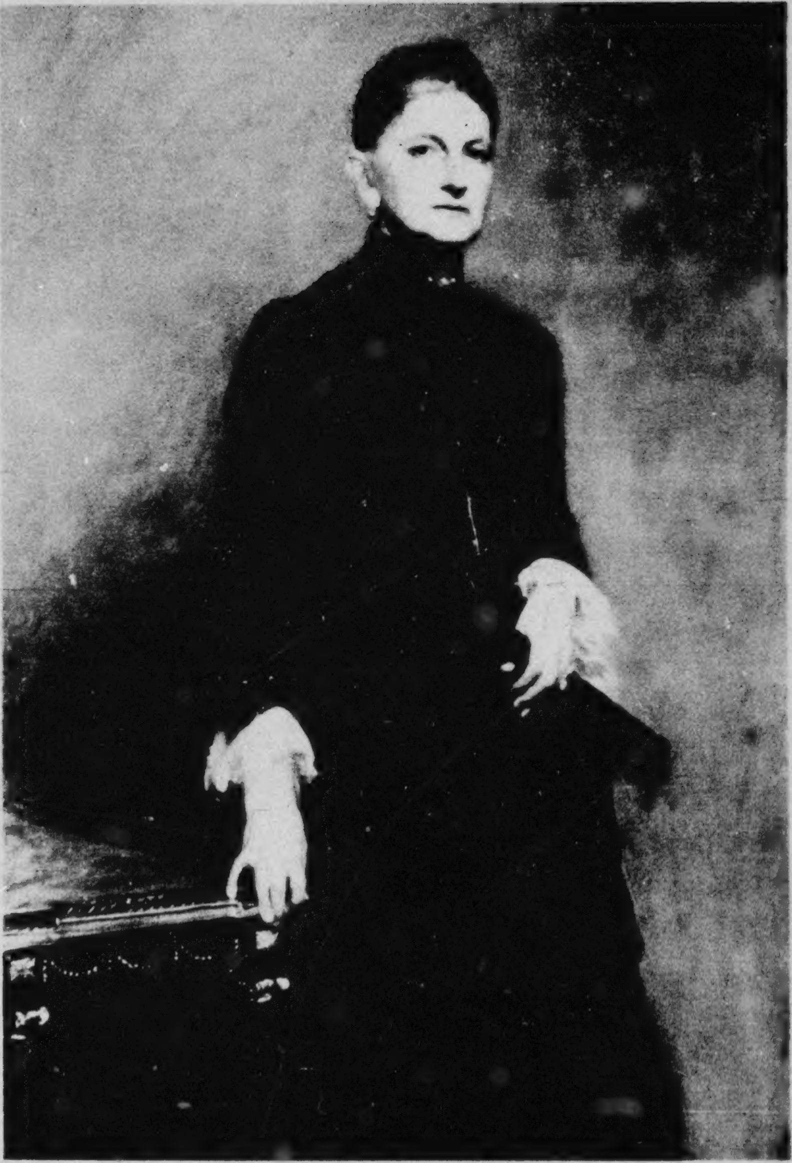


Figure 17: Mrs. Adrian Iselin, by John Singer Sargent. (1888; canvas, 60½ x 36⅝) Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Gift of Ernest Iselin.

The portraits of John Singleton Copley provide a useful image of eighteenth century woman: solid, forthright, firmly established in time and space. *Mrs. Ezekiel Goldthwait,* 1771 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), is an older woman looking back, it seems, on a full and successful life. *(Figure 16)* Dressed in lustrous satin and fine lace, she presents a bulky and impressive figure; as in so many Copley portraits, the brocade chair and highly-polished table *place* the sitter, establishing her concretely in a tasteful—and wealthy—environment. Mrs. Goldthwait looks firmly out of the picture at the viewer. She sits squarely in her chair, leaning her arm on the table as if convinced of its solidity, its strength; with her other hand she reaches determinedly out for the rounded, lustrous fruit. If this is an American Eve, she is a successful and purposeful one!

By contrast, portraits of wome in the mid-to late-nineteenth century present a far less solid and secure image of their sitters. Like Copley, John Singer Sargent painted portraits of wealthy and fashionable people, but his women swirl in fluttery fabrics or dramatic postures; they are not placed with the same concreteness as Copley's women. More will be said about Sargent later, but for the moment we may contrast his *Mrs. Adrian Iselin,* 1888 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), (*Figure 17*) with Copley's portrait. Like Mrs. Goldthwait, Mrs. Iselin is an older woman; however, instead of resting firmly in her world, she seems adrift in it. She stands next to a delicate carved and gilded table, the only other object floating against the picture's golden background. Unlike Mrs. Goldthwait, who could lean solidly on her table, Mrs. Iselin can only touch hers tentatively with the tips of her fingers. The increased fragility of the environment reflects the sitter's own uncertainty; her gaze, while still directed at the viewer, seems less confident, less controlled. Here is no earth mother but a slightly tremulous society matron.

The contrast between eighteenth and nineteenth century women can also be seen by comparing Mrs. Goldthwait with one of the most famous mothers of all times Exactly one hundred years after Copley painted his portrait of Mrs. Goldthwait, James McNeill Whistler painted the famous portrait of his mother, *Arrangement in Grey and Black* (louvre, Paris). It is especially important to note Whistler's title for his picture. He certainly had no intention of portraying a particular person in the same sense as Copley did; for Whistler, interest in form and pattern almost entirely superceded interest in character. However, Whistler's mother provides us with a forceful image of late nineteenth century woman, as remote and uncommunicative as Mrs. Goldthwait was immediate and self-confident. Cool and distant, she stares off into space instead of looking directly and emphatically at the viewer. Somehow, in the course of a century, the vitality of Copley's energetic woman has been sapped.

What were the cultural trends that removed nineteenth century woman from the vibrant forcefulness of Mrs. Goldthwait and sent her retiring, in pensive abstraction, to her rocking chair? We can get some idea of the forces at work by looking at a series of controversial sculptures.

Hiram Powers' *The Greek Slave, (Figure 15),* completed in 1843, survived an initial outburst of public indignation to become one of the most popular sculptures of the nineteenth century. This statue of a nude woman was highly controversial in a society where Horatio Greenough was severely criticized for portraying naked babies. Powers took for his subject the Greek struggle for freedom from the Turks, portraying a young Greek girl being sold as a slave in a Turkish bazaar. Although she is naked and her hands are chained, the woman gazes stoically into the distance, relying, as Powers wrote in his description of the statue, "upon the goodness of God." It was "not her person but her spirit that stands exposed," Powers wrote,[8] and the American public soon accepted *The Greek Slave* as an exemplar of feminine purity. In her classical features and demure expression, critics saw ideal beauty, made more poignant by its sense of helplessness. As popular sculptor John Rogers sagely observed, the chain was the secret of the statue's success. *The Greek Slave* became tremendously popular and was reproduced in hundreds of plaster casts and miniature models throughout the century.

The chain was replaced by a rope in Erastus Dow Palmer's *The White Captive*, completed in 1859 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). This portrayal of a young girl taken captive by the Indians evokes the same sense of triumphant purity. Describing the scene, Palmer wrote that his subject realizes "through every vein and nerve the horrors of her situation, but virgin purity and Christian faith assert themselves."[9] The success of Palmer's sculpture shows the power of *The Greek Slave* as a model; once again, the combination of helpless purity and hopeless subjugation was seen by the public as attractive and highly moral.

The difference between such moral nudity and a less acceptable sort is seen in the public's reaction to Frederick MacMonnies' *Bacchante and Infant Faun* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, commissdioned by the architect of the Boston Public Library. This slender bronze statue portrayed a naked female figure dancing, holding a baby in one hand and with the other dangling a bunch of grapes over his enraptured head. The statue caused a furor when it was unveiled in 1897; and it is interesting to notice that the protest centered not so much around the figure's nudity as its drunkenness: it was seen as an insult to American motherhood.

In these three sculptures, two acceptably moral and one scandalous, we have a clue to the kind of thinking that set women on their nineteenth century pedestal. The appeal of figures like *The Greek Slave* and *The White Captive* lay in their suggestion of woman's vulnerability, her subjugation. As Rogers remarked, the chain is everything. By contrast, the figure in McMonnies' statue caused a scandal because it was too licentious, too unbridled. While professing to foreign visitors to worship and serve their ladies, American men apparently received enormous satisfaction from imagining them threatened or enslaved. This is "the other side of the medal" referred to by Muirhead; not by accident did the image of a Turkish harem occur to the visiting Polish observers.

Furthermore, public reaction to these statues reveals that Americans entertained assumptions about the female body. To an astonishing extent, in all three statues the palpable human body was simply wished away; the female figure was simply etherealized into a symbol of a moral state, either admirable, as in the first two cases, or reprehensible, as in the third. The nudes, popular opinion insisted, were not really nude at all. Woman existed *only* in a moral sphere, only as an ideal creature.

The pressure of living up to an ideal was felt by women of all sorts in the nineteenth century. The controversial advocate of free love, Tennessee Claflin, still evoked a conventional image of the female sex in her arguments for suffrage: "Woman as a whole...is possessed of a healthful, saving, purifying power that is needed everywhere. The basest sensualist bows and worships in the presence of a pure and holy woman, and loses the power to think of such a being falling to his level."[10] Even Isabel Archer, the sensible heroine of Henry James' PORTRAIT OF A LADY, yearns romantically to "move in a realm of light, of natural wisdom, of happy impulse, of inspiration gracefully chronic." "Sometimes," James wrote, "she went so far as to wish that she might find herself some day in a difficult position, so that she should have the pleasure of being as heroic as the occasion demanded."

The excesses of the feminine ideal were dealt with less gently, of course, by Mark Twain, whose dislike of romanticization led him to say that Sir Walter Scott caused the Civil War. In THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN he created the memorable character of Emmeline Grangerford, who had died young but had left behind a repertoire of sentimental pictures like the one of a dead bird entitled "I Shall Never Hear Thy Sweet Chirrup More Alas," or the picture of "a young lady...at a window looking up at the moon," "mashing a locket with a chain to it against her mouth," with the caption, "And Art Thou Gone Yes Thou Art Gone Alas." Huck Finn pronounces a deadly judgment on such sentimentality when he comments, "These was all nice pictures, I reckon, but I didn't somehow seem to take to them, because if ever I was down a little they always give me the fantods."

In real life, the demands of the feminine ideal took a terrible toll on nineteenth century women; the ailing female was all too common throughout the era. Mark Twain's wife Livy suffered more or less chronically from incapacitating headaches, as did the wives of other nineteenth century writers, such as Sophia Hawthorne and Elinor Howells. Even forceful women like Harriet Beecher Stowe, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Jane Addams suffered nervous breakdowns—the price they paid, no doubt, for trying to force a strong will into culturally dictated roles. Catherine Beecher, the sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe, conducted a survey of women's health in the middle of the nineteenth century, and found that among her acquaintances in dozens of American cities the delicate and sickly outnumbered the healthy women by at least four to one, and up to ten to one in some cases. The practical reasons for this bad health are compelling enough—tight clothes, unhealthy food, lack of air and exercise—but the presence of psychological pressures undoubtedly contributed to the problems, and brought American women far from their popular idealizations.[11]

One measure of the strain American women felt was a certain air of unreality which attached itself to life for women in the nineteenth century. The "woman's world" is perhaps most compellingly documented by the most accomplished female artist of the century, Mary Cassatt. The daughter of a Pennsylvania businessman, Mary Cassatt studied art in American and Europe until she became acquainted with Degas in Paris and was invited to join the emerging Impressionist group, exhibiting with them in the 1870s.

In spite of her success as an independent figure and her acceptance on her own terms as an artist, Mary Cassatt drew her subject matter chiefly from what is usually thought of as the "woman's sphere," domestic scenes of motherhood and social life. Like her fellow Impressionists, she experimented with open-air painting, but hers are usually domestic landscapes, young girls picking apples in an orchard or riding in carriages; many more of her paintings are centered around the home, where fashionably dressed ladies meet in the parlor or mothers tend their babies in the nursery.

In *A Cup of Tea,* 1880 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), we have a representative Cassatt scene. *(Figure 18)* It is a decorous social event: two ladies drinking afternoon tea in a parlor. Cassatt has depicted a charming scene; the textures and patterns of the cloth, wall paper, silver pots, the marble mantle and picture above it, are delicately wrought. The impressionistic lightness of the brushstroke and color soften the scene and give it a certain radiance. And yet, is there not something somewhat stifling in the atmosphere of this picture? The

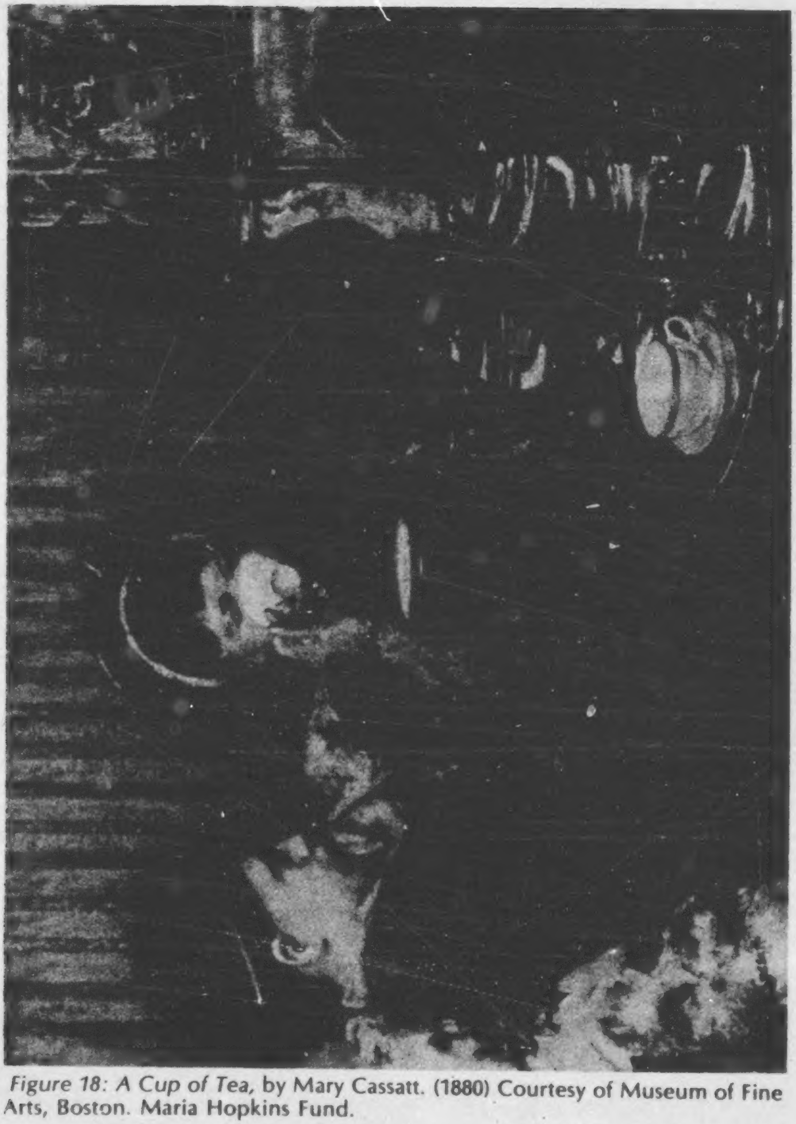


Figure 18: A Cup of Tea, by Mary Cassatt. (1880) Courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Maria Hopkins Fund.

two women gaze off abstractedly; they do not look at each other. They sit close together as if to make up for the lack of communication between them. Contrast this scene to the vigorous portrait of Mrs. Goldthwait, sure of herself and of her world, looking firmly out from the picture toward the viewer. Perhaps, as the Polish travelers suggested, the woman's world was, after all, merely a comfortable harem?

The world of charming conventionality depicted by Mary Cassatt was, indeed the very world which Kate Chopin portrayed in THE AWAKENING, the "doll's house" which her heroine ultimately rejects. Edna Pontillier, as respectable as Cassatt's tea-drinking ladies at the beginning of the novel, gradually becomes disillusioned with role in which society has cast her, giving up housekeeping, leaving husband and children, having an affair, and finally committing suicide. In the final scene she completes her rejection of the women's world by literally stripping off the last remnants of her social role, removing her clothes and swimming naked into the sea. A potential for dramatic revolt, then, was implicit even in the decorous scenes depicted by Mary Cassatt.

The pressure of idealization and the resulting sense of unreality were portrayed in a slightly different way by John Singer Sargent. One of Sargent's most famous paintings, *The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit*, 1882 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), shows the four children of his friend Boit at play in their Paris apartment, the three oldest standing at various points in the room, the youngest sitting on the floor. The painting is usually praised for its cool clarity and charm. The asymmetrical arrangement shows Sargent's interest in Japanese prints, a connection furthered by the Oriental vases and rug in Boit's apartment. The isolation of the four children in space permits the artist to focus sympathetically on each one. Yet, despite its charm, the painting projects a slightly errie and disconcerting feeling. The huge vases dwarf even the older girls standing beside them; the whole scene has a sort of doll's house quality to it. The children are not looking at one another, but staring off in different directions, three of them gazing expectantly toward the viewer. In their sense of isolation, their strained relation to the space of the room, their sense of waiting for something undefined, they seem to exemplify the position of the American girl, waiting with some trepidation for the future in store for her. By contrast, the children's mother, *Mrs. Edward Darley Boit* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), whom Sargent painted in a separate portrait, seems far more statisfied with her situation in life. Elegantly dressed, seated upon a fine piece of furniture, she gazes serenely if somewhat vacantly out from her own niche.

Sargent was brilliantly adept at portraying the status quo in social reality, and his women glitter with all the style of their elegant harems. As Henry James wrote in THE AMERICAN SCENE, a separation between the sexes seemed to be "*the* feature of the social scene." America, he observed, was developing into a society where the men were "supplying, as it were, all the canvas, and the women all the embroidery."[12] The social scene is embroidered in style in Sargent's most famous painting, *Portrait of Madame X*, 1884 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). Here Sargent painted one of the celebrated beauties of the Parisian social world, Madame Pierre Gautreau, a girl from New Orleans who had married a Parisian banker and was known for her beauty, her ability to attract men, and her striking use of lavender make-up. The full-length portrait shows her in a regal pose, her head turned in profile, one hand holding her sweeping skirt while the other arches against a low table. Her pale skin is almost luminescent against the dusky background and the plunging neckline of her black dress. The picture was highly controversial, a possibility Sargent had anticipated, exhibiting the portrait without the name of the sitter.

In the *Portrait of Madame X*, Sargent had hit upon one of the chief features of the nineteenth century social scene: if women were to occupy a separate sphere, a bastion of culture separated from the active business world of their husbands, they would do it in a grand manner. Sargent's fascination with the dramatic led him to paint *Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth*, 1889 (Tate Gallery, london), a portrait of the famous actress in colorful costume, posed in a dramatic motion, holding a crown above her head with an intense expression on her face. Both the professional actress, Ellen Terry, and the social actress, Madame X, expressed an important aspect of woman's position in nineteenth century America. Social novels of the period return again and again to scenes of drama and theatricality: Edith Wharton's Lily Bart winning hearts by her appearance in amateur tableaux in THE HOUSE OF MIRTH, Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie finding an independent identity in the theater. Perhaps the most striking example is that incredible scene in Frank Norris' THE PIT when Laura Jadwin tries to win back her husband from his financial obsessions by appearing in one costume after another, singing and dancing and playing the castanets. Operating in society meant very often playing a role, and the costs were high.

The sense of unease aroused by both the stately Madame X and the colorful Ellen Terry is expressed another way in Sargent's *Mrs. Charles Gifford Dyer* 1880 (Art Institute, Chicago). This painting in many ways represents the antithesis of Madame X, showing a woman who has withdrawn from the social world rather than finding triumph there. Instead of standing upright, looking down at the viewer, Mrs. Dyer is seated, looking upwards, her hands in her lap. She looks particularly fragile, particularly strained. In fact, this is an uncanny portrait because the woman it portrays went insane shortly after the picture was painted, and Sargent seems to have caught her mood of vulnerability, of distress.

Only rarely did Sargent venture so deeply into the painful side of American life. But the tensions of woman's role in the nineteenth century were explored in a profound way by the greatest painter of the age, Thomas Eakins. Eakins, whose portraits concentrated on personality as much as external appearance, and who probed with almost uncomfortable depth into his sitters' frame of mind, had a controversial and troubled career, in contrast to Sargent's popularity and success.

Eakins' *Portrait of a Lady with a Setter Dog*, 1885 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) is but one of his many memorable images nineteenth century woman to set beside those swirling, social figures of Sargent. The woman in this picture, Eakins' wife, has that enervated air characteristic of an age with so many semi-invalids. Her head is too large for her body, and she slumps back against the chair, her hands lying limply in her lap. Yet unlike Mary Cassatt's tea-drinkers or Whistler's mother, Mrs. Eakins looks firmly out from the picture. She is fragile and vulnerable, but she is conscious of her situation. If the firm clarity of Mrs. Goldthwait has blurred in a changed social setting, an unwavering assessment of reality was still possible. In this perceptive portrait of his wife, and in many other portraits afterward, Eakins takes us into the precarious, strained existence of woman in the nineteenth century.

One concluding insight into the position of women in this ideal-worshipping century can be solicited from an unlikely source. Winslow Homer is an artist we normally think of in terms of what one critic has called the "masculine wilderness" of American art, the terrain mapped out by Leslie Fiedler. By the end of his career, the period of his most famous paintings, Homer's two major spheres were the forest and the sea, the territory of the classic American novel of the nineteenth century. By then, women of all kinds had been banished from his paintings.

Yet it is important to remember that Homer began his career as a magazine illustrator, and that he took a great deal of interest, particularly at the beginning of his career, in portraying fashionable people in social settings. His skaters, bathers and croquet players show decorative charm if little personality. Homer later portrayed the fishermen's wives of Tynemouth with sympathy, but his attempts to paint American women in country scenes in pictures like *Fresh Air, Country School, The Sick Chicken, The Initials, The Bridle Path* or *Milking Time* resulted in sentimental or stereotyped images.

More interesting, and more disturbing, is Homer's treatment of women in his seashore and rescue pictures. Even *High Tide*, painted as early as 1870 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), the startling note is sounded. He portrays three women on the beach, dressing after a swim. One woman, her back to the viewer, is wrapped in a cape; one, shielded by her dripping hair, wrings out her skirt, and a third woman, seated, puts on her shoes. Yet despite his carefree subject, Homer has painted a strange and forbidding picture. Two of the women have their faces hidden, and in their scattered position in space, they seem out of harmony with each other. The seated woman looks up with an odd expression at something we cannot see outside the picture, and the little dog at their feet registers alarm at the strange scene.

This foreboding turns to tragedy in *Life Line, 1884* (Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia). Here Homer, fascinated with the drama of the sea, portrays a kind of rescue device designed to help lifesavers reach people in trouble offshore. Suspended from a cable which stretches across the top of the picture, the rescuer here carries an unconscious woman to the shore, which can be dimly seen at the right of the picture. The bodies of the two figures, rescuer and rescued, are intertwined in a jumble of limbs, so that the viewer finds it hard at first to interpret the image. One is struck by the heavy weight of the woman in the picture; drowned or saved, she lies like a heavy lump across the rescuer's lap. Her scarf, blowing in the wind, obscures his face. Woman's fragility, the quality so firmly emphasized in her ideal image, including some of Homer's own early women, is a dead weight in this picture, one which threatens to sweep away the man who serves her, as well as herself; yet Homer seems to find this very helplessness attractive.

Undertow, 1886 (Clark Institute, Williamstown, Mass.), again portrays a drama of thessea, but here the scene is almost morbid. Two women bathers have apparently been swept away by the undertow; they lie passive, their limbs entangled, as two rescuers carry them out of the sea. Here the strange attraction of the helpless female form is even more evident. Unusually for Homer, the figures of the drowning women are solidly modeled, and the face of one woman is quite clear. In her classical features and sculptural pose, as well as in her helplessness she recalls *The Greek Slave*. And here the submerged implication of a masculine pleasure in the subjugation and degradation of idealized woman is even more evident. The sentimental woman of the earlier paintings has become the lifeless figure swallowed by the sea.

With the coming of the twentieth century, of course, the situation of women in America changed radically. One of the many casualties of World War I was the idealization of woman; the Twenties brought the "new woman," the flapper, the revolt from Victorianism. We can see the cracks in the ediface of woman's image, however, in the early years of the century in two remarkable portrayals of women.

The first was the insight of Henry Adams, scholar, diplomat, descendant of Presidents and witness to the vast changes wrought by transition into the

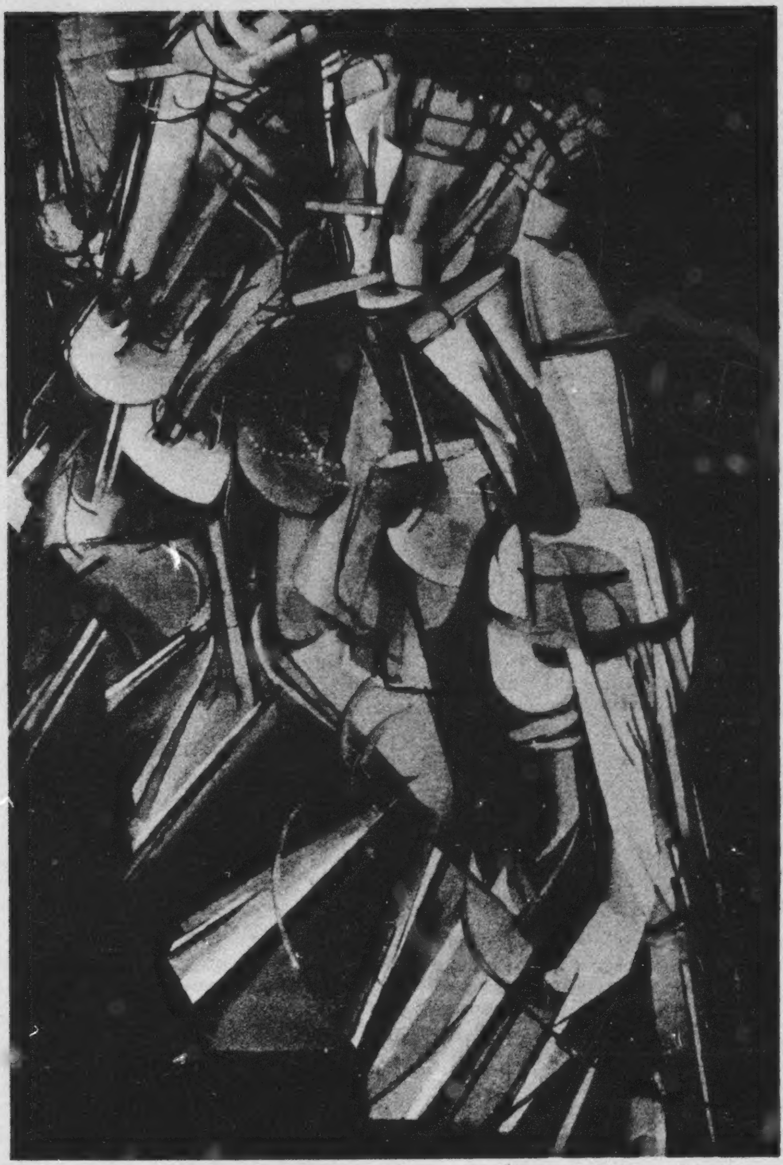


Figure 19: Nude Descending A Staricase, No. 2, by Marcel Duchamp. (1912; oil on canvas, 58 x 35 inches) Courtesy of Philadelphia Museum of Art. Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection.

modern world. In THE EDUCATION OF HENRY ADAMS he describes his wondering fascination with the machinery in the Paris Exhibition of 1900; comparison of the great turbine engines to the magnificent medieval cathedrals he so admired seemed to him to epitomize the contrast between the past and the future. The Virgin, whose worship had inspired the building of cathedrals, had been replaced by the Dynamo. In America, Adams realized, the Virgin had never really ruled, except in a debased, sentimentalized version: "An American Virgin would never dare exist," he wrote. But now even this partially-realized creature, this indulged wife living in the harem of the business culture, was being supplanted as the idol of American culture. The Victorian women would be replaced as a symbol, Adams saw, by the twentieth-century machine.

A few years later a similarly explosive notion came home to the American soil. In 1913 a group of New York painters organized an exhibition to bring some of the innovative new art being produced in Europe to the United States, and the Armory Show, as it is now called, provoked an immense controversy and changed more or less permanently American artistic currents. The show for the first time brought Cubist and other modern art to America in quantity—Picasso, Matisse, Dufy, Cezanne, Braque. The newspapers called it "pathological," art students burned its organizers in effigy, but the exhibition changed the country's very way of seeing. One of he most controversial paintings in the exhibition was a Cubist work by a French-American, Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase*, 1912 (Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia). (*Figure 19)* Here we have a new perspective on the controversy over female nudes in America. It is not the violation of her person, but the violation of her very form that roused the public's anger and dismay. As Adams had foretold, the Virgin had been replaced by the Dynamo; the figure portrayed here is not even human, let alone sexual. Instead of stoically accepting her fate in stillness like *The Greek Slave*, this woman has been galvanized into motion; her form has splintered into a thousand pieces. With this painting, the idealized nineteenth century woman had been fragmented and modernized, and her ideal image would never recover.

FOOTNOTES TO "PRESSURES OF THE IDEAL"

1 John I.H. Baur, REVOLUTION AND TRADITION IN MODERN AMERICAN ART (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 12; Fairfield Porter, THOMAS EAKINS in The Great American Artists Series (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1959), p. 28.

2Lloyd Goodrich, QINSLOW HOMER in The Great American Artists Series (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1959); Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL, rev. ed. (New York: Dell, 1969), p. 308.

3"Psychoanalysis," Smith-Rosenberg asserts, "can historically be called the child of the hysterical women." She goes on to point out that intense depression eventually might be eeough to characterize hysttria—or as she puts it: "Under the broad rubric of hysteria, nineteenth century physicians gathered cases which might today be diagnosed as neurasteria, hyponchondriasis, depression, conversion reactions, and ambulatory schizophrenia."—From a mimeographed version of a paper on hysteria kindly sent me by the author, who has since presented other versions for the Organization of American Historians, the Berkshire Conference, and the American Studies Association. See also the papers of Ann Wood on the subject area, and of Smith-Rosenberg and Charles E. Rosenberg, "The New Woman and the Troubled Man: Medical and Biological Views of Women in Nineteenth-Century America," JOURNAL OF AMERICAN HISTORY, in press. It is not difficult to imagine the women portrayed by Eakins and others suffering from the medical burdens described in this literature.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TEN:

LEARNING TO SEE ANEW

[1] Important discussions of woman's image in nineteenth century America appear in Page Smith, DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970); David M. Kennedy, BIRTH CONTROL IN AMERICA: THE CAREER OF MARGARET SANGER (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), especially chapter 2; and Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood 1820-1860," AMERICAN QUARTERLY, XVIII (Summer, 1966, pp. 151-74. The image of woman in the South is explored in Anne Firor Scott, THE SOUTHERN LADY: FROM PEDESTAL TO POLITICS 1830-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). The development of the cultural stereotype is viewed from a different point of view in Elizabeth Janeway, MAN'S WORLD, WOMAN'S PLACE: A STUDY IN SOCIAL MYTHOLOGY (New York: Dewta Books, 1971).

[2] Thomas R. Dew, "Dissertation on the Characteristic Differences Between the Sexes," 1835, cited in Aileen Kraditor, ed., UP FROM THE PEDESTAL: SELECTED WRITINGS IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN FEMINISM (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), p. 46.

[3] Thomas Nelson Page, SOCIAL LIFE IN OLD VIRGINIA, 1897, cited in Scott, p. 5.

[4] Jonathan F. Stearnes, "Discourse on Female Influence," 1837, quoted in Kraditor, p. 47.

[5] James Muirhead, THE LAND OF CONTRASTS: A BRITON'S VIEW OF HIS AMERICAN KIN, 1898, in Neil Harris, ed.; THE LAND OF CONTRASTS 1880-1901 (New York: George Braziller, 1970), pp. 37-8.

[6] Francis and Theresa Pulszky, WHITE RED BLACK, 1853, in Oscar Handlin, ed., THIS WAS AMERICA (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964; orig. ed. 1949), p. 238.

[7] Cited in Smith, p. 78.

[8] Quoted in 19TH CENTURY AMERICA, PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURE New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1970), entry 57.

[9] *Ibid.*, entry 60.

[10] Cited in Smith, p. 149.

[11] Smith discusses this question in great detail, pp. 133ff.

[12] Henry James, THE AMERICAN SCENE (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1968; orig. ed. 1907), pp. 65-6.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Images of Women in the Paintings of DeKooning WESSELMAN and LINDNER

BETTE E. CHMAG
with
KATHERINE PLUMER and MARJORIE ARLENE MENDEZ

"The Women made a traumatic impression on the public—to date, they have been the last modern paintings to do so."

—Thomas B. Hess, WILLEM DEKOONING, 1959, p.117

"It is as if the Great American Nude Series represents the results of all the femininity in the world, with an end product, tightly stoppered, of pure essence of Woman. A clinical specimen."

—J.A. Abramson, "Tom Wesselman and the Gates of Horn," ARTS, May, 1966, p. 48

"Lindner has been fascinated by the assertive, perhaps even dominant role played by women in American society. [!] His women often resemble idols, to which the artist's attitude is at once reverent and critical."

—Rolf Gunter Dienst, RICHARD LINDNER, 1970, (translated from German), p. xix.

Let us speak of mouths. Of mouths and teeth and *vagina dentata*. Let us begin by noting the importance of mouths in the images of American women to be found in the paintings of Willem de Kooning, Tom Wesselman, and Richard Lindner.

> IN ONE OF THE FIRST STUDIES, YOU PUT THE MOUTH ON IN COLLAGE?
>
> Yes, that helped me. I cut out a lot of mouths. First of all, I felt everything ought to have a mouth. Maybe it was like a pun, maybe it's even sexual...But anyhow I used to cut out a lot of mouths and then I painted those figures and then I put the mouth more or less in the place where it was supposed to be. It always turned out to be very beautiful and it helped me immensely to have this real thing. I don't know why I did it with the mouth. Maybe the grin—it's rather like the Mesopotamian idols, you know, they always stand up straight looking to the sky with this smile, like they were just astonished about the forces of nature, you feel, not about the problems they had with one another. That I was very conscious of; and it was something to hang on to.[1]

*This began three years ago when Arlene Mendez, who was a student of mine at Wayne State University, wrote a seminar paper comparing de Kooning's and Wesselman's use of women. I asked her to investigate Lindner the following summer, and she was able to add three pages of material to her statement just before I left for Sacramento. When Kathleen Plummer, herself an art historian, became my student and research assistant at SSUS, it was natural that she should become interested in picking up where Arlene left off. Kathy found she could not agree with all Arlene said, and the difference led to a deeper kind of analysis. As final author of the chapter, I of course had the privilege of imposing my own views as the final statement, but while I take responsibility for all that is said herein, I also wish to acknowledge that the contribution of the two students at different stages in the development of the essay was far more than the contribution of research assistants; they deserve to share in the authorship of the essay itself.—BC

So did de Kooning acknowledge, during a 1969 interview, the important role of mouths in resolving the agonizing dilemmas that persisted through the painting of his famous Women. The mouths were puns, the mouths were sexual, the mouths were the grins of idols who felt a greater kinship with nature than with intellectual problem-solving—such mouths seemed right somehow on the women. A series of photographs tracing the development of *Woman I* (1950-52) demonstrates how de Kooning repainted and reemphasized mouth and neck, over and over again, as if somehow they held the woman together.[2] In another context, de Kooning said his women were masked by the "American smile," which critic Thomas Hess described as "that ubiquitous, vacant, friendly, distant polite expression" seen frequently in advertising, and in fact, for one of his sketches for the Women series, de Kooning actually cut the smile out of a 'T-Zone' ad for Camels in LIFE magazine.[3]

Like de Kooning before him, Wesselman too was influenced by the larger-than-life, innocuous smiles of women that stared down from billboards and movie marquees, the mouths all frozen into the same empty, friendly grin. After his Great American Nude Series had established him in Pop Art circles, Wesselman, interestingly, produced an entire series of blown-up Mouths, shaped canvases in which the mouth became a giant icon or imago—bizarre, irreverent, comic.

In Richard Lindner's women, one cannot escape the mouths. "Especially noticeable are the eroticism of her wide, sensual mouth, and her searching, enticing expression," says one observer, describing*Napoleon Still Life*(1962) with a phrase that fits many other works as well.[4] There are images of Lindner women eating—in particular, licking ice cream cones in *Disney Land* (1965) and *Ice* (1966)—that carry the suggestion of man-eating, both on an erotic, pornographic plane and in a threatening Freudian sense. Yet Lindner's heavily lipsticked mouths are also part of the mask his women wear, matching the goggles, helmets, leather belts and gloves the women often assume—accoutrements that are anything but enticing. Thus the false eroticism of the overpainted mouths becomes, finally, perversely off-putting.

What can be said, for openers, is that mouths have been obsessions with all three of these artists, all three of whom have built careers with their depictions of American women.

More than this, one could see in the *teeth* of *Woman I*, the most famous woman of modern art and the first of de Kooning's 1950s Woman series, the beginning of an era. To be sure, teeth had appeared before *Woman I* in the works of modernists—in Picasso and Pollock, for instance, who often embedded clenched teeth in a swirl of images or a fury of paint—but theirs was an attitude of high seriousness. So fearsome were these teeth in their contexts, that more than one critic was led to remark upon their relation to Jungian concepts connecting the fantasy of *vagina dentata* to the archetype of the Terrible Mother, the Devouring Woman:

> *vagina dentata*: a vagina with teeth: a phantasy, more often unconscious than conscious, in which female genitalia are equated with a castrating, devouring mouth

—(Leland E. Hinsie, M.D., PSYCHIATRIC DICTIONARY, Oxford, 1970.)

De Kooning derives from this tradition, but he also departs from it. The teeth of *Woman I* do threaten—the Terrible Mother is present here, with bared fangs, a cousin to Pollock's she-wolves. And the preoccupation with teeth in subsequent de Kooning works is telling, too. In the giant canvas *Woman and Bicycle* (1953), two sets of teeth appear, the second set placed, ominously, in the "throat" region of the figure. The "pink" women of his more recent paintings are described in a NEWSWEEK review as "splayed out carnal figures who proffer puckery lips and terrible, toothy grins..."[6] In some of his landscape works, especially *Attic* (1949) and *Excavation* (1950), images of teeth like those in Picasso and Pollock can be found enmeshed in the web of teeming abstract imagery (One critic calls *Attic* "a conglomeration of figures, torso, breasts, nipples, limbs. Fishes swim through it. *Mouths open and shut, teeth grin.*")

But with de Kooning's teeth in the Woman series, exaggeration makes all the difference. The oversized teeth become the most obvious clue to the humorous intent of these paintings, a more effective tip-off to what the artist knew he was doing ("...above all, the hilariousness of it. I do think that if I don't look at life that way, I won't know how to keep going"[8]) than even the overblown breasts, the hips that spread to become one with their surrounding environment, or the gestural excess vented in the brushstrokes themselves. The result is satire—savage but comic. The women may be grotesque, but they are fun and funny. "I can't see myself as an academic," de Kooning once said, explaining why he had turned down an honorary degree. "I think of myself as a song-and-dance man."[9] The statement is germane as a clue to his attitude toward women—or, to be more precise, to his subversive intent in painting women the way he did.

That is to say, the arrival on the scene of de Kooning's toothy *Woman I* in 1952 signalled the emergence of a certain new attitude toward life that was soon to be defined by the generation that followed de Kooning and the Abstract Expressionists. This attitude was a special combination of horror and humor that came to be—not only in American painting, but more obviously, in literature, film and popular culture—the "hallmark of the age" (The phrase is Leslie Fiedler's; he used it to describe the attitude as he found it transferred from comic books to literature). This was the age of black comedy and the grotesque, of anti-art gestures and theature of the absurd, sick jokes and insult greeting cards, pop cynicism, publicized irreverence. *Woman I* becomes the ancestor not only to the women in Wesselman, Lindner and other painters, but also to Ken Kesey's Big Nurse, Portnoy's mom, Albee's Martha in WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF, Norman Mailer's women, and to dozens upon dozens of other women who begin to turn up on stage and screen to leer and smother and cause their sons to sigh, OH, DAD, POOR DAD, MOMMA'S HUNG YOU IN THE CLOSET AND I'M FEELING SO SAD.[10]

An important issue, in terms of the central theme of the essays in this volume, is the relation of these images of women in fiction, film, and painting to the women in real life. It is not accidental that the kinds of images we will find in de Kooning, Wesselman, and Lindner make their appearance at the same time that the Great American Bitch shows up—along with a whole gallery of grotesques, prostitutes, shrews and shrikes—in literature and film, or that both come to prominence in fiction and art at the very time the Happy Housewife Heroine described by Friedan comes to dominate American life.[11] One of the things that happens is that viewers learn with a shock to "read into" real life women surrounding them the images they encounter the world of artists and writers. At the end of a dazzaling passage describing *Woman I*, Thomas Hess, editor of ART NEWS and the foremost authority on de Kooning, illustrates how the transfer takes place, how the detached recognition of *Woman I's* alliance to traditions tracing to ancient times gives way, in the viewer, to the startling recognition of her kinship with the people one meets in one's own life:

> De Kooning's woman is, of course, the White Goddess, and readers interested in her aunts are referred to archaic Boetia and the lost cities of Mycyna, Knossos and their Tarascan settlements, to the Theban goddess Nut and Marilyn Monroe, Aztec dolls, Kali, Artemis-Isis, Willendorf, Jiggs' Maggie. But she is more interesting in herself....After the initial shock of her appearance wears off, she sits next to us on the bus, or is seen waving at someone behind us in a restaurant. (Hess, 1959, p. 29)

No wonder, then, that the Women had a traumatic effect on the public when they first appeared. They forced viewers to reassess, at one and the same time, the dominant image of women as sainted mothers and sweet young things (Mom, we recall, was supposed to be as American as violence and apple pie) and the dominant tradition of painting itself, threatening to wipe both out of existence. Not since the Armory Show of 1913, when Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*—Joy Kasson's choice of image to mark the end of the idealized woman of the nineteenth century—had floated in fragments before their startled eyes, had the American public been so challenged by a woman's body. When a de Kooning exhibit opened in Chicago in 1951, most of Chicago's daily papers carried stories attacking the "ridiculous" nature of the exhibit, and Huntington Hartford in 1955 took out a full-page ad in the New York papers, called "The Public Be Damned," that centered around an attack on de Kooning.[12] According to reports on the first showing of *Woman I*, the cognoscenti were as traumatized as the philistines:

> Manhattan gallerygoers are an experienced lot. Within the space of a few blocks on 57th Street they can see every kind of painting, from pensive and pastoral to wild and wooly, from dully familiar to aggressively frightful. But even the initiates who pushed into the crowded gallery where Willem de Kooning's paintings were on show last week came out reeling a little.[13]

Woman I soon became the most widely reproduced painting of the 1950's in the world. This fact alone indicates that the attitude represented in the work was intuited and shared by de Kooning's contemporaries, certainly a major reason that *Woman I* brought the artist his first great fame. The fact is acknowledged as "one of the ironies of history" even by critic Hilton Kramer, who holds to the view that *Woman I* actually signalled a decline in de Kooning's art, a "descent first into an agitated but increasingly empty rhetoric and then into the fulsome, if sometimes poignant, flacidity of the more recent 'Women' series."[14] Whether one approved or not, this single painting marked an end and a beginning simultaneously for both the artist and American art.

Before turning to the works of the three artists in turn, this would seem the time to enter a comment on the question of the artists' personal attitudes toward women. All three, of course, are male. The women they paint are not especially flattering. Is the conclusion that the three are guilty of sexism—the way Mailer and Fiedler have been found guilty of being the MCPs of American literature by feminist critics—and is this the purpose of this essay? It is not. We spend little time on either praising or indicting the artists (except, in the end, praising Lindner over his critics). Our aim, rather, is to learn what their images tell us about the American woman as she has appeared as a subject for modern art. It is true that the artists' attitudes matter, and matter very much, and it is not incidental that all three are male. But whatever their personal histories and biases, they would hold very little interest for us if their paintings did not communicate on their own. It is the images in the works we are concerned with, and the works of these three artists speak volumes.[15]

DE KOONING's WOMAN SERIES

> De Kooning's women are queens, tipsy, trullish, hiccuping with Byzantine dignity, rulers of a country that names its hurricanes "Hattie" or "Connie." —Hess, 1959, p. 21.

That *Woman I (Figure 20)* is intimidating cannot be denied. There is, to begin with, her sheer bulk—more impressive even than Wesselman's *Great American Nude No. 53,* who "spans two panels like a whale" and whose "enormity is vulgar."'s more overpowering than Lindner's Amazon in *119th Division,* although she could justly be seen as sister is size to portlier Lindner women, especially around the thighs. *Woman I* does indeed possess, a "queenly" domineering power. There is a glorious physicality in her flesh and blood colors and a wild vitality derived from the frenzied brushstrokes and heavy, slathered-on paint. As the artist attacked the canvas, the vehement lashing-out established a mood of intensity and struggle, so that the image itself assumes the quality of the brutal power with which it was rendered. Her fierce gaze and gnashing teeth are nightmarishly menacing.

From whence came this power to intimidate? In his 1968 volume on de Kooning, in the very opening paragraph, Thomas Hess rather pointedly replied: from his mother.

> Willem De Kooning was born in Rotterdam, April 24, 1904. When he was about five years old, his mother and father were divorced. The court assigned his older sister to his mother, and Willem to his father, probably because of the extremely warm relationship between them. His mother, however, fought the decision, at first simply by grabbing up the child and taking him home with her, later through a successful appeal to the court...The mother, Cornelia Nobel, today a spry nonagenarian still living in Rotterdam, was a bartender in a cafe largely patronized by sailors. *I touch on these details because, as will be indicated, they supply possible clues to de Kooning's magesterial Woman of the early 1950's*—an image which has become a totem and an icon of the times. (Emphasis added.)

Scarcely concealed beneath the engaging image of the spry bartender surrounded by sailors, leaving her bar to snatch up her child from the courts (severing him from the "warm" relationship with his father) is the image of the Terrible Devouring Mother, whose powers of intimidation have awed male authors and artists through the ages. Later in the volume, Hess makes his charge

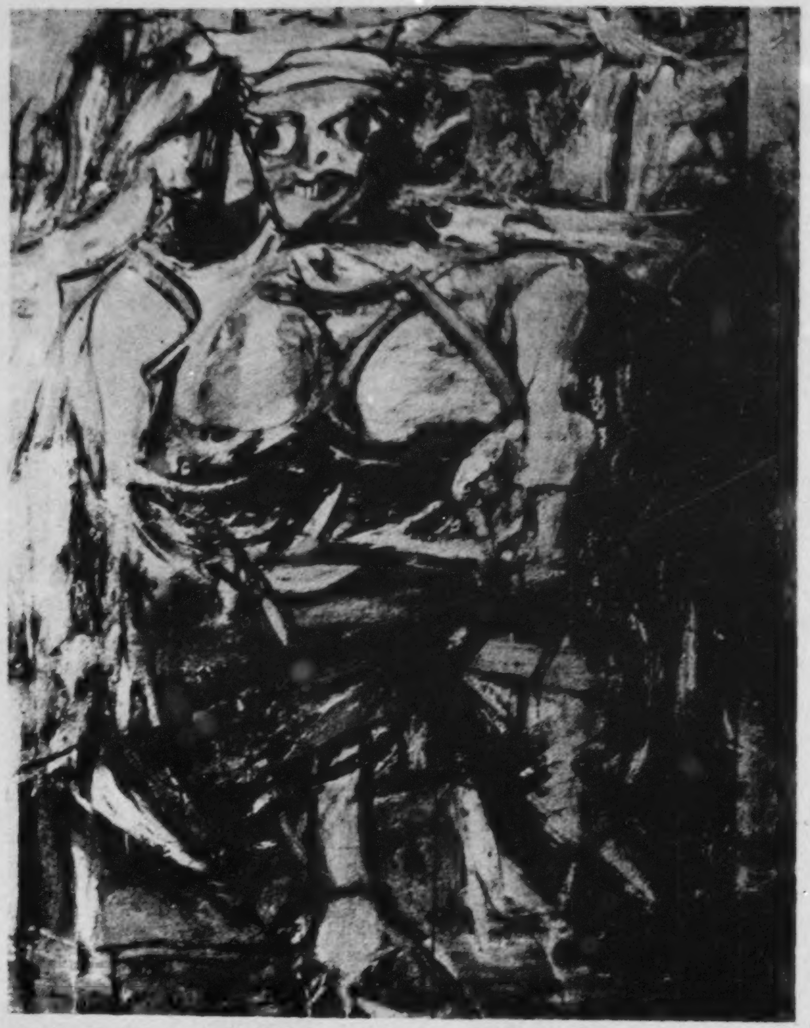


Figure 20: Woman I, by Willem de Kooning. (1950-52; oil on canvas, 75⅞ x 58 inches) Courtesy of Collection, the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

against de Kooning's mother more explicit. *Woman I,* he says, represents the Black Goddess: "the mother who betrays the son, gets rid of the father, destroys the home." Perhaps that was one reason the son "took so many months to finish *Woman I,* and why it was immediately afterward destroyed, only to be resurrected through the intercession of an admired friend." And de

Kooning's complaint that nobody had noticed that his woman was meant to be funny?

> There is something comic about the evocation of a Black Goddess anyhow—like a fifty year-old man complaining that when he was five his mother broke his bow and arrows. He may still feel the punishment, but he has to laugh at the same time. Hilarity is a balance to horror—and so is banality. —(Hess, 1968, pp. 75-6)

Even the humor, so important in de Kooning, is conceived as the son's means of compensating (balancing) the sin committed by the mother, who is basically "to blame."

Andrew Forge has a different explanation for the ability of the Women to intimidate: "They are all sexually agressive." Forge divides the women de Kooning painted over the course of his career into four groups. (Before 1942, the artist's figures tended almost always to be men; after that, women. Between the periods of the different women, the "landscapes" tended to dominate, although de Kooning once told Hess: "The landscape is in the Woman and there is Woman in the landscapes.") The first group of women, painted from 1943-6. Forge identifies as "the ones that look like Bette Davis"; the second is made up of those who "look like wolves in grandmother's clothing," 1950-55 (*Woman I* is the first of these); the third group is a 1961 series on paper; and, finally, from 1964 to the present, there are "the girls like laughing cow pats"—beginning with the agitated "pink" women whose flesh and bodily emissions trickle over the canvases in rivers of rouge-red and tan and brown. What kind of women are these? Forge wants to know. He disagrees with the stress that has been placed, by Hess and by de Kooning himself, upon their archaic origins; they are, rather, "very real, very modern." More than that:

> They are all sexually agressive. What varies is the spirit with which they threaten. Some are all gathered up into their breasts like strutting birds, furies, the breasts swollen to absorb the whole torso. Others, less formidable, seem caught in positions of ludicrous embarrassment....But it is not really they who are embarrassed.

Of the most recent paintings, Forge declares that a roomful of such figures "can induce real genital panic."[18] No, there is no denying that the Women are intimidating. Men are threatened by the mother image and the sexual aggression, women because they do not want to look that way.

Frontal, enthroned like Byzantine madonnas, their regality and dominance is, however, mitigated by a bawdy sense of humor, which appears not only in their grimaces, but in floppy hats, high-heeled feet kicking into the air, a sense of crooked lipstick and the sense they are slipping off their chairs. Even Hess's description of de Kooning's mother hints at the life-in-the-streets bawdiness that alleviates the Woman's power to threaten. Forge, too, acknowledges that the women who "induce real genital panic" are at the same time "the most jolly of the lot, like those formidable and wonderful girls who laugh off the shaming aspects of sex and make everything all right" (p. 246). Historically, one can trace the time when, somewhere during the early forties, "tenderness changes to high comedy" in the artist's portraits of women, when the men de Kooning has been painting with their "intent, concentrated look" are abandoned for "glittering duchesses who lapse into funny poses and have a weakness for cockeyed hats." (Hess, 1959, p. 29 and Forge, p. 246). Humor intrudes, and while we wonder whether the Women care to be treated as a joke, we may also guess that their sense of abandon and self-assurance suggests they must have been people possessed of a strong sense of self (in psychological terms, a "strong ego structure").

Too strong, perhaps? Are these women, for all their loud jolliness, essentially the victimizers of men, the brutalizers, the terrorizing Moms? Or are they victims themselves? One of the themes we wish to develop in this essay is that the women in all three artists' works may be seen as both victims and victimizers, the threatened and the threatening—but in entirely different ways.

We have seen how *Woman I* threatens; in what sense is she herself brutalized? The jagged, broken lines of her body are ruthlessly fused with the rest of the canvas, until it is difficult to distinguish the figure from the background. She blends in with what Hess has called the "no-environment" of the rest of the canvas. Her body is literally torn apart. The process continues in subsequent work. By the time de Kooning painted *Woman VI* (1953), the environment has eaten up all but her eyes and mouth. This ambiguous relationship between the figure and the environment is quite intentional on de Kooning's part; it is central, in fact, to the meaning of his art. De Kooning asserts as much in a significant interview with David Sylvester:

> THAT'S TO SAY, WHEN YOU STARTED TO DO THE WOMEN, IT WASN'T BECAUSE YOU'D MADE A THEORETICAL DECISION, AS SOME PAINTERS HAVE, TO "RETURN TO THE FIGURE"? IT WAS JUST A DESIRE?
>
> Yes. It had to do with the female painted through all the ages, all those idols. And maybe I'd been stuck to a certain extent, couldn't go on....there was this thing I wanted to get a hold of....So I thought I might as well stick to the idea that it's got two eyes, a nose and mouth and neck.
>
> ....
>
> WHILE YOU WERE ACTUALLY PAINTING THE WOMEN, WERE YOU TROUBLED BY THE ABSURDITY OF DOING THIS THING AGAIN WHICH HAD BEEN DONE SO MANY TIMES BEFORE?
>
> Oh yes, *it became compulsive in the sense of not being able to get a hold of it* and the idea that it really is very funny, you know, to get stuck with a woman's knees, for instance....I knew there are a lot of people, they paint a figure because they feel it ought to be done, because since they're a human being themselves, they feel they ought to make another one, a substitute. I haven't got that interest at all. I really think *it's sort of silly to do it*. But like I said before, at the moment you take this attitude, *it's just as silly not to do it*. One has to have one's own convictions.
>
> ....
>
> BUT THE IMPACT? YOU WEREN'T CONCERNED ABOUT GETTING A PARTICULAR KIND OF DRAMA OR A PARTICULAR KIND OF FEELING?
>
> No. When I look at them now, they look vociferous and ferocious, and I think it had to do with the idea of *the idol, the oracle, and, above all, the hilariousness of it. I do think that if I don't look upon life that way, I won't know how to keep on being around.* (Sylvester, pp. 20, 22, 24) (Emphasis added)

Ferocious yet hilarious—the artist himself acknowledged the combination of horror and humor as a contemporary attitude, yet he was aware of his relation to the ancient tradition of painting women as *idols* and *oracles* (the latter word again suggesting the importance of the mouth, and also the idea, to be found in Lindner as well, of woman as one with special powers, hex powers, the Conjure Woman). Above all, the passage demonstrates how the ambiguous relation of the woman to her environment, discussed earlier, is a mirror of the ambiguity in the artist's mind over the meaning of painting itself and of life itself.

The ambiguity is compounded in the artist's statements about his feelings toward women and in our awareness of the ambiguous relation of Woman to ancient and modern worlds. His painted women, de Kooning has speculated, may be an expression of the womanly side of himself or, on the other hand of the "irritation" women "sometimes" cause in him.[19] Hess, in two different monographs calls *Woman I* the White Goddess and the Black Goddess—how can she be both? She is white in her regality (I think of the actual queens of Western Europe—Holland, Spain, and England—who ruled over dark continents during periods of colonialism as much as I think of the mythic White Goddesses worshipped by peoples dark and light), but black, so Hess decides later—as a betraying mother who rejects the father and destroys the home. (Hess, 1968, pp. 75-76)

What is clear is that *Woman I*, despite her ambiguous relationship to the environment around her, *persists*. Her disappearing act is not complete. At one and the same time, she may suggest a White Goddess and a Black Goddess, a fertility queen, a Minoan snake princess, the lady next door, someone's mother-in-law, or an unresolved Oedipal complex. While she is elusive, she is omnipresent, and the wild force emanating from her asserts itself again and again. Her piercing gaze and fierce grimace, along with her blood and guts physicality, assert that she is *alive*, physically and spiritually persisting in the face of a brutalizing environment, possessed of an ability to endure which from time immemorial has been associated with certain types of women.[20]

WESSELMAN'S GREAT AMERICAN NUDES

One of the charges levelled against *Woman I*, with her cartoon-like face and her body disappearing into the gesture of paint, was that she was threatening in another sense: she threatened to destory the tradition of painting itself. It is a charge that modern art has often heard from conservative critics resisting abstraction and offended by the anti-art stances of the avant garde. But it was also, certainly by the time Pop Art emerged in America, a criticism of considerable importance to understanding what a whole "post-modern" generation of writers, artists, and intellectuals had to say. The caption Hilton Kramer attached to an illustration of Wesselman's *Great American Nude No. 51* (1963) *(Figure 21)*, for an article significantly titled "Episodes of the Sixties," will serve to make the point:

> Wesselman's Great American Nude series laughs at the solemnity of modern art, and yet deploys an iconography out of consumer advertising and girlie magazines along artistic lines established by various traditional approaches of modern art. (ART IN AMERICA, January/February, 1970, p. 59)

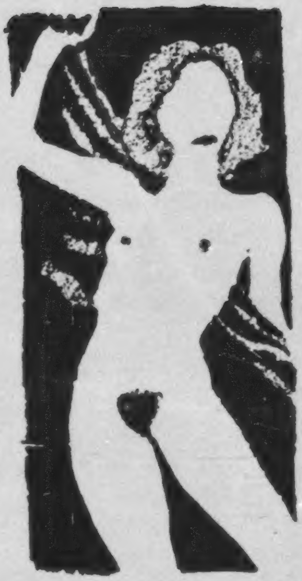
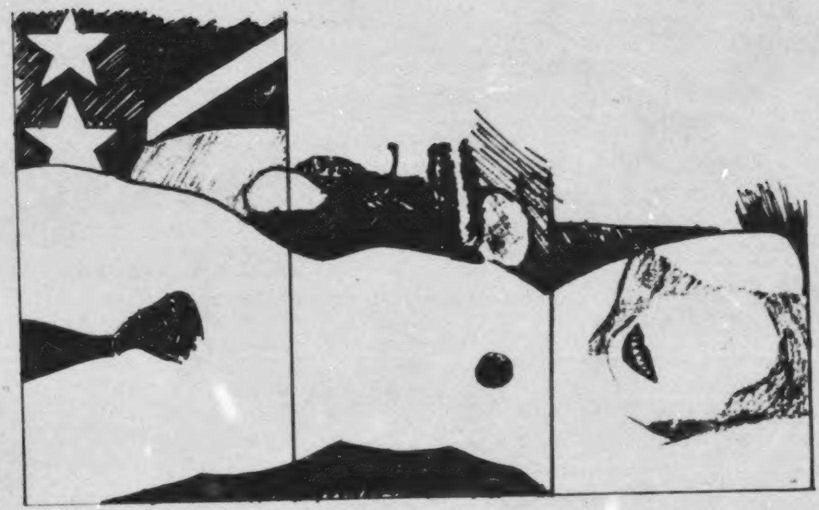


Figure 21: Freehand reproductions by Glenn McCoy (necessitated by the fact that we received no response from the galleries to our requests to reproduce the paintings) of *Details* from
(top) Tom Wesselman,
Bathtub Collage No. 3 (1963)
and
(bottom) Tom Wesselman,
Great American Nude No. 51 (1963)



In Wesselman, the reference to the tradition of the ideal woman in art history is even more overt than it is in de Kooning, more self-conscious, and more ironical.

The Great American Nudes belong to the centuries-old tradition of the reclining nude (particularly the reclining Venus), described by Sir Kenneth Clark in his classic work THE NUDE: A STUDY IN IDEAL FORM, and populated by such greats as Goya's *Maja Unclothed*, Boucher's *Miss O'Murphy*, Manet's *Olympia* and the nudes of Matisse. The Great American Nudes refer to a particular version of the reclining nude, the Ecstatic Nude, whose ancestry Clark traces back to Titian—for instance, Europa in the *Rape of Europa* or the reclining Maenad in the foreground of the *Bacchanal*, both with heads thrown back and legs splayed open, as ancestors of the *Great American Nude No. 51*, who assumes an identical position. Thus de Kooning and Wesselman both make playful and sarcastic use of inherited traditions.

Far more striking, however, is the difference, rather than the similarity, between de Kooning's large and alive figures (and the nudes of the art-history tradition as well) and Wesselman's large but passive and empty shapes. That difference and its evolution, although Wesselman himself sees it solely in terms of a personal development during a particular era in American history, become a mirror of the evolution in the attitude toward women that took place during this same period.

Born in 1931, Tom Wesselman is twenty-seven years de Kooning's junior; he came to art and the choice of woman as theme almost inadvertently, in a thoroughly American context, under conditions of an entirely different kind. De Kooning said he was led to come to America, at the age of 21 in 1926, attracted by America's riches, Walt Whitman's writings, books about cowboys and Indians and "the beauty of the movie actress Constance Bennett." "I was also fascinated," he said, "by those long-legged American girls I had seen in photographs."[21] Richard Lindner, also coming to America from Europe, felt the same fascination with the country he had come to, and his art was influenced accordingly. That is, in both de Kooning and Lindner, the inherited art traditions of Europe are transformed by the American environment, and their women are transformed too.

But Wesselman was born here, and at a later time. Growing up in a comfortable Cincinnati suburban home with little tension around him, he was aware of possessing no serious ambition, not even when he enrolled in college (where he took the easiest courses and was more interested in sports than study); he was "committed to ordinary middle-class pursuits."[22] When his college was interrupted by the draft call, "The horror of Army life," he said, "provoked me to create humor, purely in self-defense. This humor took the form of cartoons, and I began to teach myself to draw." (p. 134) Afterward, he returned to school and in time was introduced to abstract expressionism while attending Cooper Union.

> That revolution became personally significant to me, and I got caught up in its mystique. At some other time or in some other city, I doubt that I could have become interested in painting. As it was, it seemed utterly hopeless ***because de Kooning had already painted all my paintings.*** (pp. 135-36) (Emphasis added)

On graduation he experienced a prolonged depression—the same sort of depression recorded by novelists in America who passed through American middle-class life during the same period. He abandoned his "student images." "The change grew out of a realization that I was dishonest in trying to use de Kooning's wildness in my work. I had to find my own." (p. 136) Then one night, he said, after doing some collages of nudes, during a period when he was working with the idea of associating real objects with painted ones in his collage compositions (unaware, he claims, that other "pop" artists had become similarly fascinated with the objects of the everyday world), Wesselman "had a dream about red, white, and blue." "This dream provoked the 'Great American Nude' series which provided an integrated set of arbitrary colors and shapes within which to limit myself." (p. 137) In time, the collages became larger and began to change. How?

> I can only describe it as a tightening of the elements, a kind of process of depersonalization. Colors became flatter, cleaner, brighter; edges became harder, clearer; and there was more use of real objects....I felt the need to lock up my paintings so tightly that nothing could move. (p. 137)

Soon he was using actual billboard images in his compositions, and his works became huge renditions of the "locked-up," "tightened" look of things—portraits of the banality of modern life in larger than life dimensions.

In the entire tale, there is no explanation for his decision to choose the nude, the woman, as his theme. Even in his dream life, color rather than woman is Wesselman's subject. The "tightening" of line and edge seem more important than the fact that it is a woman who happens to be there. The strong possibility is that he simply took his choice of subject from de Kooning—and from Matisse, to whom his works make reference.[23] In Wesselman's account of how he executed the works that have made such reputation as he has enjoyed, we find no compelling personal reason for choosing woman as subject or for the particular rendition of her that he finally put forth. What we have instead is an admission of a personal need to break from de Kooning's "wildness" and find his own way to make a statement.

If Wesselman does not speak to the question, however, his paintings do. In sharp contrast to *Woman I*, the women in the Great American Nude series and the "Bathtub Collages" (see *Bathtub Collage No. 3, 1963, in Figure 21*) project no strength or energy in their banal suburban surroundings. Rather, they seem as "committed to ordinary middle-class pursuits" as was Wesselman himself in his early years. Their existence as mere "shapes" is as insubstantial, as "arbitrary" as the colors the artist chose, their life as static, as flat, as depersonalized as his new-found style. Thus did the artist, all unconsciously, describe how his struggle to find an original style, one that would not be "dishonest" in its dependence on de Kooning, led him to portray more accurately than he knew the change that had actually taken place in the lives of middle-class American women. In content as well as style, Wesselman's women might well be designated the "anti-de Koonings" of the early 1960s.

A close examination of the works will show how that contrast is achieved. While de Kooning in *Woman I* employed "action painting," the ultimate style of liveliness, to imbue his women with a sense of being alive, Wesselman employed every possible device to *reduce* the nude's personality and energy. His figure is flatly painted, with no shading or modelling, a two-dimensional image. Although, in several of the Great American Nudes, a Matisse-like outline is used to define the figure, Wesselman's line omits the suggestion of a three-dimensional form pulsating with vitality (which Matisse's line has); rather, it is the line of machine-produced commercial cartooning, cold by comparison, *rendered—as one critic aptly suggested—"with factory precision." Great American Nude No. 51, the outline is abandoned altogether, and the figure is* defined merely by the edge of a flat color area. The meticulous clarity of the edge, juxtaposed to the terrible inner vacuity of the figure, gives a chilling, eerie effect. In contrast to de Kooning's chaotic use of color is Wesselman's use of stark white or light pink for the body, alleviated only by the dark pubic hair, the pink, stuck-on nipples ("like the rubber caps with which things are stuck on kitchen walls"[25]), and the large, theatrically red mouth.

The image of woman that emerges stands in strong contrast to the images in both de Kooning and Lindner of strength under brutalization. This woman has been more brainwashed than brutalized, and she has succumbed entirely to her role. (She is probably married to, or likely to marry, the equally brainwashed Man in the Gray Flannel Suit of her era). The Great American Nudes, mere ghosts of the women they might actually be, can be identified as women only by the badges of their sexuality—painted mouths, dyed hair, nipples and genitalia, sometimes the faint outlines of a "bikini tan"; they have been reduced to the lowest common denominator of their identity, to sex objects. The ultimate blasphemy may be the sly use, in *Great American Nude No. 51*, of the division of the canvas into a "religious" triptych of three sections: one for the mouth, a second for the tits, a third for the pubic region.

The woman in the series also contrasts starkly to her surroundings. Here Wesselman's interest in incorporating real objects into his works served to heighten the "wiping out" of the female nude figure. Coke bottles, artificial-looking fruits, flowers in vases are rendered three-dimensionally with care, while the nude remains a flat cut-out standing in the tub or lying on the bed. In some works of the Great American Nude and Bathtub Collage series, *real* radiators, Venetian blinds, television sets, toilet seats, towels hanging on racks, even real noises (on tape) coming in from the street outside, assert themselves as more substantial than the human figure. If it were not for the fact that she takes up space or that she has a sexual function, we would hardly notice the Great American Nude at all. She possesses in this sense little power; what seems to hold her together is her pasted-on mouth (the smile is expected of her), but beyond that, she has less going for her than an orange or a radio the artist has placed in her room.

Between 1962 and 1964, toward the end of this period in particular, the Great American Nude became, in Lucy Lippard's words, "bolder and more effective," partly because Wesselman was incorporating more and larger elements of "real" material into his collages and also posing his figures (black women as well as white, sometimes glimpsed through a door to the bedroom where they waited, reclining) in more obviously erotic poses. Then, in 1964-65, he abandoned the nudes to do still lifes of cars, radios, beer cans and the like, of which Lippard says: "They have the clarity and strong design of the Nudes but lack the latter's joie de vivre and lively charm."[26] That the "joy" is as much in the tangibility and color of the objects around her as in any emotion enjoyed by the woman herself, despite her erotic pose, seems apparent from these works, in which the objects of the consumer culture assert their ontological superiority to the human figure.

The American-ness of the Great American Nudes is also noteworthy. It appears not only in the symbols of stars and stripes, the red, white, and blue the artist dreamed, the American landscapes on the calendar art on the wall, the brand names on objects (Coke, Budweiser), and the common-denominator taste in American home furnishings. The woman herself is also a product of the consumer culture, "packaged" in the slim shape that dieting preserves, the Clairol-yellow hair, the Gleem-straight teeth, the practiced smile that imitates the ads. Critic Udo Kulterman sees her as a victim of modern advertising, surrounded by commercially produced objects, encouraged to believe that if she buys this, wears that, puts on this, she will achieve sexual gratification.[27] This is the very argument Friedan makes about the housewife in America during this era, who was led by advertising and psychology to believe that she would know orgiastic bliss from the experience of waxing the kitchen floor, of dyeing her hair blonde, of using a new kind of soap. It is this same suburban housewife, Friedan pointed out, who became, out of boredom, the sex-seeker of suburbia whose behavior shocked the researchers. She was accused of laziness, of having things too good, of having too many things. Her dehumanization—in contrast to that of Lindner's women doing battle against the city and the brutality of the modern world—is the result, according to this view, of having *no* battles to fight, of being "dysfunctional"—with little left to make her human.

How, then, can such a figure be seen as threatening? It is precisely her desperation in the face of her increasing dysfunctionalism, her dependence upon sex alone to provide her with an identity, that makes her so—and a glimpse of that desperation will occasionally appear in Wesselman's works. *Great American Nude No. 51*, for instance, is threatening in a sexual way: the fluid, har-edged outlines of her body, together with the seductive, arms-behind-the-head pose, are heightened by the cropping of the body in such a way that it more than fills the canvas and thrusts itself out upon the viewer, disturbingly exhibitionist. The erogenous zones of the body are the only features that define it, displaying more boldly than a PLAYBOY centerfold the brazen expectations of the nude. The omission of the eyes is especially significant, as a means both to intensify her depersonalization and to suggest how blindly undiscriminating she is, willing to take on any comers (In her eyelessness, she contrasts both to nudes who are shown to be decorously unaware of the viewer , as in Degas' *After the Bath*, and those who seem to engage the viewer in a kind of personal or private seduction, as Ingres' *Odalisque*.). What is threatening is that her blatancy is embarrassing. In spite of her sexual adornments, she is, as Grace Gleuck has put it, "as lacking in erotic appeal as, say, a straight-on view of Mount Popocatepetl."[28] How does one make love to what Abramson calls "a clinical specimen"?

> The sexuality of Wesselman's nudes is a remarkably abstract, pristine phenomenon, despite, or possibly because of, the meticulously generalized rendering of carnal attributes and trappings....It is as if the Great American Nude series represents the results of all the femininity in the world, with an end product, tightly stoppered, of pure essence of Woman. A clinical specimen. (p. 48)

The meaning of these nudes and their place in history are distilled, finally, into the artist's choice of title for the series, clearly intended to be ironic. The national predilection for the superlative—Great American novels, The Artichoke Capital of the World, America's Finest This or That—is here invoked for the artist's ironic intent. But given the identity of this woman—or lack of identity—it is a tragic kind of irony. The powerless, insubstantial, vacuous suburban nude may be "American" indeed—but she is anything but "great"!

THE AMERICANIZATION OF LULU: LINDNER'S "119TH DIVISION"

> "The work of Richard Lindner should be seen against this background: Lindner, an American, does not belong to Pop, but Pop art was of decisive importance for him."
>
> —Richard Dienst[29]

> "...I suppose I did think of Lindner as a bridge between European Expressionism and a very sophisticiated American Social Comment....Now, given the buxom, brazen B-girls of his '60s work, I think he has moved from a European to an American feeling."
>
> —Robert Indiana[30]

> "Woman as a modern motif took on a special coloration in our century, and Lindner shared with his artistic confreres a vivid interest in her new guises....Lulu steps out now in *119th Division*, for instance as a full-fledged American doll, swinging her hips provocatively and dominating Lindner's compositions....Underneath the banal life he documents hovers the sinister which he long ago recognized in Berlin."
>
> —Dore Ashton[31]

> "Woman triumphs. All activity emanates from her. With her sex she attacks the male and she introduces brutality and intensity into the game. Lindner's creatures are precocious girls with knowing bodies and innocent faces like dolls, Lolitas in miniskirts...or older women looking younger...They are all alike in this: their strength is centered in their prominent thighs. They don't want to grow old. They don't even want to grow up....The tragedy lies in the opinion that to have a destiny means to be given death, prone to dying, sure to die.
>
> "Is this the world of America, is this New York?"
>
> —Wieland Schmied[32]

These four statements by four critics, even when they are dead wrong,[33] will serve to introduce into historical perspective the impact of Richard Lindner's women and the meaning behind the emergence of their powerful presence during a particular era of history. To telescope that meaning into a single word that unites Lindner's personal history to the nation's social history during this era is to answer Schmied's final question with a resounding YES. The destiny of the so-called "triumphant" woman, Lulu become Lolita, the old women trying to become Barbie dolls, American women wanting to be Marilyn Monroe—is death. Depersonalization, dehumanization, disappearance behind armor and masks, and, finally, death. This is the message, I wish to argue, the "very sophisticated American Social Comment," that Lindner's women, symbols of a hopeless struggle against the brutalizing powers of the modern urban world, have to offer.

The years 1963-64 mark a moment of convergence in the treatment of American women by the three artists under consideration here. At about the time that Wesselman allowed his Great American Nudes to reach their height of brashness as they lay spread out on their beds, only to be abandoned for his work on a series of still lifes, de Kooning was beginning his fourth and most recent series of women, the agitated pinks and laughing cow-pats that one man saw as "increasingly empty rhetoric" while another viewed as inducing "real genital panic." It was these same years, primarily, that saw the Americanization of the women in the works of Richard Lindner. Three years older than de Kooning and thirty years older than Wesselman, Lindner too had come to America from Europe—but from a different country, and, as a German Jew, for very different reasons. Yet his contribution to the development of the image of woman in the history of modern American art was not to reach its culmination until after it had come under the influence of Pop Art. Robert Indiana himself a

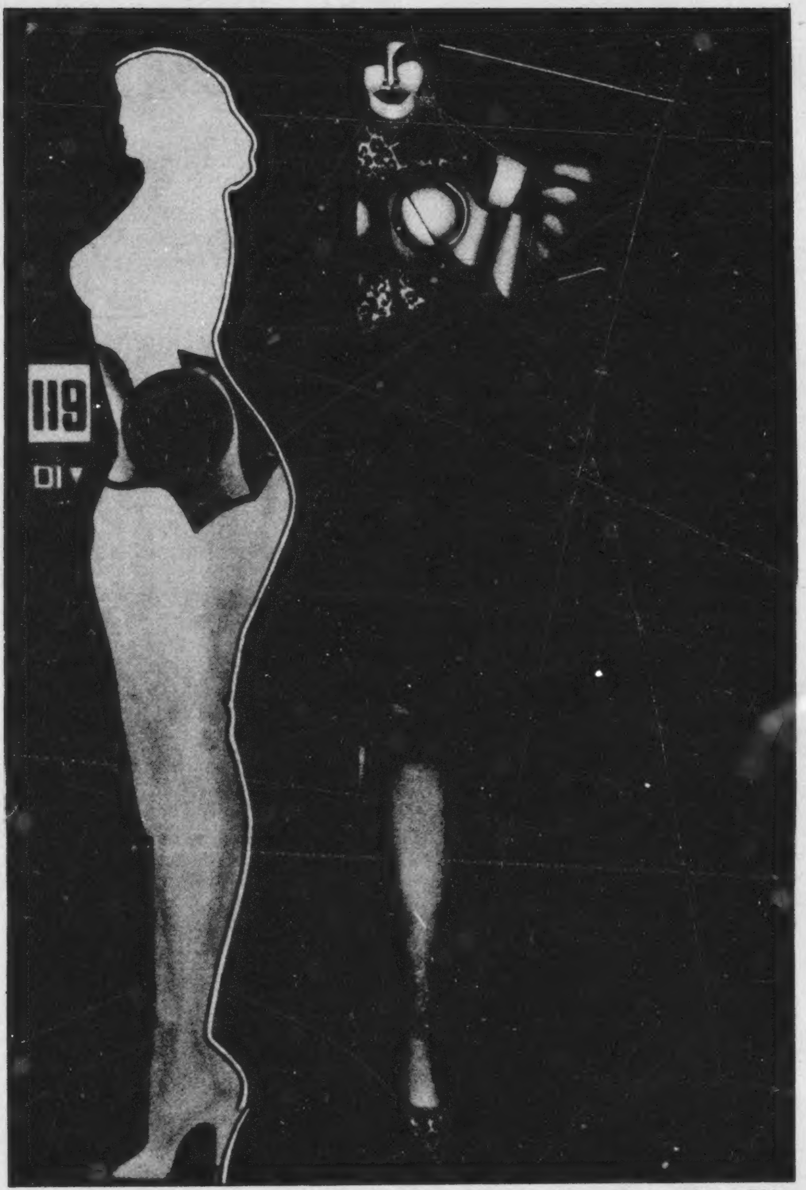


Figure 22: 119th Division, by Richard Lindner. (1965; oil on canvas, 80½ x 50½ inches) Courtesy of Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. (photograph by Eric Sutherland)

Pop artist and early Lindner admirer, is right in seeing in Lindner a fusion of Europe and America; but Dienst is also right in identifying the older man as post-Pop, one who "does not belong to Pop" but upon whose work Pop Art "was of decisive importance." (Lindner himself remarked on the "curious" fact that the public did not begin to like his works until after Pop Art had made its impact.) Thus Lindner becomes the appropriate choice to illustrate a third stage in the development of the image of American woman in modern American art—a stage that well might be labelled, "After the Feminine Mystique, or Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?"

Born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1901, Lindner lived for two decades in Nurenberg, where he became familiar with a number of traditions that were to have their effect on his images. For one thing, Nurenberg was the city of torture chambers, notably the terrible Iron Maiden that tourists still come to gape at. It was the city of toy manufacture, in which doll images (male and female) were everywhere to be seen, and which itself had a toy-like character. It was the city of Nazi party conventions (Lindner thought Nurenberg a fearsome place). It was located in that part of Germany where the character-type called Lulu or Lola could be identified in night-club acts, film, and theatre as well as on the streets, a particular kind of innocent corruptress, doll-like or child-like, who attracted men without trying to—a type best known to Americans, perhaps, in the version played by Marlene Deitrich in THE BLUE ANGEL. All these influences, along with his sensitivity to "the sinister" in modern life and his years of training in fine art (to be combined, in America, with years of experience in commercial art) Lindner brought with him when he escaped Hitler's Germany for New York in 1941. At first, he tended to see America as Brecht and Weill had seen it before him, its streets filled with gangsters, its women gun molls (his *Moon Over Alabama* recalls the Brecht-Weill song in MAHAGONNY), but in time he became fascinated with the real New York—a New York that brutalized the men and women who lived and worked there. Perhaps only an artist capable of fusing the inherited European tradition, including the German sensitivity to the sinister and grotesque, with the brash American world of machines and violence and consumer goods could have produced so powerful a portrait of the modern American urban world as a place where dehumanization of the person and sado-masochistic relations of the sexes deserved to be viewed only with "the cold glance."[34]

In Lindner's work, the theme of woman as victim and victimizer reaches its consummate expression. The "buxom, brazen B-girl" who appears, in two views, in *119th Division* (1963) *(Figure 22)*, is fully clothed in satin, breast-plate and leopard skin, imbued with a hardness and brittle eroticism, seemingly ready to do battle. Although she is related to the life of the streets (42nd Street in particular), she exudes no bawdy humor to temper her personality, as do the women of de Kooning. She is *deadly* serious; one is not surprised that she should be called sister to the Iron Maiden of Nurenberg, herself becoming an instrument of torture. Her predilection for violence is implicit in her physical strength and size—especially as with all Lindner women, in her grotesquely swollen legs and thighs. The title of the work also hints of her association with the violent, while her leopard skin shoes and scarf are passing references to her association with bestiality (in other works, the association becomes explicit when tigers, dogs, or panthers appear among the characters, or when the women is explicitly related to animality in the title, as in *Leopard Lily*.) Even her clothing is suggestive of torture, the curious padded section looking at once like a shoulder pad and a robot-like artificial arm grasping one of her breasts in a vice. Critic Schmied is excellent in describing the impact of clothing of Lindner's figures:

> Their clothing gleams like coloured lamps: the breasts of the women glare like targetplates...ironclad like motorcyclists, they are wrapped in corsets like knightly armour, they hide under helmets and behind spectacles, they are tied with belts, garters, and buckles, they wear visor-like masks and uniforms of leopardskin....Their clothing is agressive down to the colour composition: poisonous green next to piercing violet, shocking pink against dangerous blue. Even the smallest formal details show this—the points of high heels, the curve of hips and hair, the edges of epaulettes, the dagger-like points of sunglasses, puffy lips and brutal thighs. The rim of a lady's hat cuts like the tail fins of her car. (p. 252)

It took Lindner two decades of living and painting in the American environment before he could reveal in his work a natural familiarity with the American scene. Dore Ashton has traced that acclimatization, nowhere more obvious than in his step-by-step transformation of the Lulu figure in his words. Even in early works, Lulu appeared corseted and armored, despite her childlike innocence; by 1963, Ashton says, Lindner is "allegorizing American life" in a painting in which Lulu appears, surrounded by American types. The street language of New York then takes over, and he begins "dwelling on the blaring language of the signs, insignia, and outlandish costume he finds in the modern New York carnival." At just his point, "Lulu steps out now as a full-fledged American doll....In *119th Division* he brings her forward in two compartments." The right compartment shows harsh colors, jangling blues, purples, yellows; leopard shoes and blouse "recalling the predominance of tiger and leopard motifs in early modern German theatre"; "she strides for ward confidently, her armored breasts first."[35] On the left, she is "schematized" into a pink diagram with a flame insignia from some regiment or other in her belly, and yellow and pink outlines suggesting she is a sign for a night-club where the 119th Division would be very welcome." (Ashton, p. 56) Remembering my own experience of the German towns where American army troops were stationed, I suddenly recognized the insignia on the lift as being, indeed, a fusion of German and American sources designed to lure Army yokels into German bars.

But there is more than that to Lindner's division of the painting into two compartments, reminiscent of the double images in his *Double Portrait* (1965) and *One Way* (1964). In many of his paintings, women—and men as well—are pictured as toys in the game of life, toys manipulated by society, yet toys that manage (somehow) to manipulate others the way robots do: cruelly, impersonally, often with implied violence. The impulse of the child, Baudelaire pointed out, is to tear apart the toy to see what makes it tick or go, to see its "soul." The impulse of the artist in offering the cutaway diagram in *119th Division* would seem to be identical: the desire to show "how she works"; her womb, shown encased in silvery steel, contains a life-force of fire. The absence of any other details to add to the cut-out silhouette on the left recalls the silhouettes of Wesselman that were alleviated only by the suctioncup nipples, grinning mouth, and pubic hair; by contrast, the sheer force of the woman on the right recalls the forceful presence of de Kooning's *Woman I.* "The people in [Lindner's] paintings are like toys, and as such they convey Lindner's special concept of man: man is an object, an instrument. He functions, he lets himself be manipulated, one can wind him up to make him run...Lindner sees man with the features of masked anonymity—stereotyped, pre-imprinted, doll-like, and artificial." (Schmied, p. 253)

As threat to men, the women in Lindner do indeed seem to surpass those of de Kooning and Wesselman. If de Kooning's could induce genital panic and Wesselman's thrust themselves shamelessly forward, then the woman in **119th** *Division* would seem capable of making a man fear for more than his sexuality—she would make him fear for his life! This is particularly true if the men involved are the spineless, conformist, "grey flannel" automatons who appear in Lindner's own paintings. It is a curious fact about Lindner's art, one that has led to much speculation, that his attitude toward the male and his portraits of him do not change over the years. The men are also toy-like and manipulable, but in contrast to the forceful women , they look like "mannequins seen in men's hat stores," stiff cutouts like paper dolls: "Their felt hats and Dick Tracy profiles do not lend them power...Not even their sunglasses, forming the mask, can make them anything more than foolish appendages to their Amazonian counterparts." (Ashton, p. 57) Biographical evidence has been brought to bear upon the contrast in the effort to explain it, Dore Ashton tracing the evolution of the "dreaming boy" image in Lindner's works from its earliest appearance to the point when he becomes "as dissectable, as diagrammatic, as an authentic machine." (pp. 37-8) Lindner himself has said that men had boys' dreams all their lives; in his conversation, he tended to poke fun at males for being absorbed in boyish fantasies, while all the while they let their wives dominate their actions.[36] Another explanation is the influence of Wedekind, whose Lulu in the plays ERDGEIST and PANDORA'S BOX seems reincarnated in the innocent temptresses of Lindner's work. "All of Wedekind's male characters, like the males in Lindner's paintings, are weak, hypocritical and equivocal. Their ruses and manipulations are in sharp contrast to Lulu's absolute candor." (Ashton, p. 31)

A more plausible explanation, it seems to me, can be found in Lindner's own sensitive observations of the American scene as he came to know it in New York. Here were men working in offices who projected precisely the conformist look of the 1950s Organization Man, which look appears again and again in Lindner's works. In a sense, Lindner painted in their working world the middle-class husbands and/or lovers of the women Wesselman portrayed in their home environment. Schmied correctly notes that "Lindner's people are ironclad like motorcyclists," but one looks in vain for the symbols of the leather-jacketed types on Lindner's *males*. Except in *Rock-Rock* (1967-68), in which the lipsticked and long'haired figure behind the guitar, the turtlenecked sweater and the leather vest could certainly be someone like Mick Jagger (if it were not for the thin moustache), the aggressive clothing and attitudes that emerged during the 1960s have been allotted entirely to the women, while the men continue to show up in hats and ties and suits, looking like "straights" in their haircuts and conventional postures even when we find them, as we often do, buried in the middle of a woman's belly (as in *Leopard Lily*) or reduced to pawns (as in *Checkmate,* 1966) before the animality of a female figure. In contrast to the colorful strong females, the men are washedout silhouettes in grey. If Lindner's theme, in social terms, is the effect upon humanity of the impersonal urban machine-world, then the effect he sees produced in men differs from the effect he sees in women: one sex is turned into automatons, the other into grotesques. Neither effect is a salutary one, neither sex comes off better than the other, neither is free from the influence.

Once we have understood Lindner's attitude toward men—the contempt in which he holds them, the fact that he finds them uninteresting—it is easier to perceive his women not only as counterparts to males but as metaphors for humanity, male and female, brutalized by the modern environment. It now becomes possible to recognize in Lindner's works the same dual vision of woman as both victim and victimizer that we have found in de Kooning and Wesselman. Dore Ashton is right: entirely too much has been made of Lindner women as versions of the Iron Maiden: "That would be like linking Hogarth with the torture instruments in the London Tower; Tintoretto with the even more elaborate Venetian instruments: Raphael with the Roman specialities, etc." (Ashton, p. 21) The image of the Iron Maiden, like the image of the modern machine culture that found its most extreme expression in America, was something to react *against*—and it is a profound mis-reading (but, alas, a persistent one) to assume an artist or writer must be cruel or unfelling and perverse if the images he forces us to look upon show a culture that is cruel and unfelling and perverse. Edward Albee once explained that his plays were not necessarily "about" husbands and wives, even though the characters were married and acted out their destructive battles in recognizable living rooms, but rather about human beings "locked in mortal combat" who happened to be married. In a similar way, Lindner's women transmit social allegories about the influence of the culture upon its inhabitants: "the battle of the sexes is demasked as a battle for power" (Schmeid, p. 252)—possibly the battle for survival itself.

In *119th Division* and other Lindner works, the "armor" the women wear must be reexamined from this perspective. The fact of armor presumes the presence of forces requiring armor. Pointed shoes and metal disks to cover breasts are not merely tools of torture, they are a means of protection; masks and girdles and swathings of satin serve not only to arouse erotic interest but also, on another level, as sheathing behind which to hide. The more elaborate the armor, the more extreme the brutality of the environment. The grandiose "aggressive" clothing thus becomes a coat of accumulated defense mechanisms. a disguise, a hard outer shell covering something—we know not what—underneath. In the left panel of *119th Division*, the corset of steel protects an "inner" fire (which may, indeed, suggest sexual aggression), but the real contrast to the other half of the painting is that here we see the woman unmasked, unclothed, vulnerable, and reduced to nothing but a silhouette. The cutaway view may also be an attempt to show what fires her, whether lust or soul. Baudelaire had argued that the reason children always want to take their toys apart is that they "want above all to see the soul," and he could not reproach any child for that: "it is the first metaphysical tendency." (quoted in Ashton, p. 20.) Whether Lindner's intent in giving us the double view of the woman here was to assert the presence within her of a vital force, a fire, even a lust, or to demonstrate how great is her need for protection from bestial desires and dehumanizing influences—in either case, a view of her as a threatening machine of torture will not suffice.

Who, then is she, this new woman, this American? Is she merely, as a "brazen B-girl," a marginal member of the society? Is she the woman the American Organization Man turns to as an alternative to the seductive housewives Wesselman painted? Lindner once expressed contempt for certain colleagues among German painters who portrayed such women in their work: "They only painted prostitutes, like good German bourgeois husbands, prostitutes with painted faces." He was not interested in "the dirty lure of the hypocritical bourgeois husband." Lulu—Lola Lola in his part of Germany, evolving into Lola Montez—was something more than that: she represented uncorrupted innocence, candor, "a principle." As Lola became Americanized in Lindner's work, the original servant girl Lulu who served her master as whore or took up a night club career became, in her new context, something like a secretary serving regularly as call girl. "Both an agent of mysterious forces and a victim of man's hypocrisy and cowardice," Ashton maintains, she remained always in Lindner's mind, innocent. (pp. 30-3)

To this interpretation, I would add that Lindner sometimes saw her innocence as fatal to her, and it is in this recognition that he advances the development of the American woman's image to its chilling conclusion. A primary clue to this recognition is to be found in two works called *Marilyn Was Here* of 1967. Like Warhol, de Kooning, Wesselman and others, Lindner saw in Marilyn Monroe a type that defined a facet of American culture at a particular time in history. But as his title tells us, the women he offers us in the two (quite different) works are not Marilyn herself but images of women influenced by Marilyn—a collage of voluptuous anatomy in one case, and in the other, an ominous outline of a half-darkened, faceless figure with a shoulder-shrug which projects Monroe-like vulnerability. Marilyn was here. Girls given Barbie dolls to play with and pictures of Marilyn to look at had tried to fit themselves into the image of the buxom, corseted, innocent girl, these paintings tell us. They also record the fact that Lulu was here, in America, as Marilyn. "They don't want to grow old or even grow up" Schmied complains about Lindner's miniskirted Lolitas, his tweens in low-cut blouses and the older women trying to look young:

> They want to remain forever in a play-world where fate cannot enter. This is the tragedy of Marilyn Monroe shown in the picture *Marilyn Monroe Was Here*. A black shadow falls on half on the figure suggesting that half of her life is extinguished. The tragedy lies in the opinion that to have a destiny means to be given death, prone to dying, sure to die.

Contrast Schmeid's conclusion with Lindner's own: he saw Marilyn as victim of Hollywood's obsession with death and sex. "They made a little-girl image of her, and then they kept her in an icebox. It was absolutely deathlike—Bellevue's morgue. They should have finished her off like they finished off Harlow" (quoted in Ashton, p. 32). For "they" read American culture; for Marilyn, read the American woman. At once it becomes clear that Lindner is right and Schmeid is wrong about the meaning of these paintings. It is not the women who "want" to stay young and remain little girls, laced into corsets to fit the image of Sego-slenderized youth, that are to blame. Today, the same Hollywood, the same American public discards women over 35 who do not fit the Barbie image; the ingenues of Cary Grant and John Wayne get younger every year.[37] It is the culture that has shoved the women into the icebox, insisting that they stay young, and pronouncing them grotesque when they, growing old, continue to try. It is that effort that has led American women to adopt the fearsome poses and take on the threatening armor and weapons we see in the Lindner works. It is the expectations of the culture that have decreed her destiny: live up to the image or face the choice—early death (as with the Lola-Marilyns) or disintegration into hard unfeeling grotesques, as in *119th Division*. This, then, is what happened to Baby Jane in the paintings of Richard Lindner.

A SUMMING UP

We have seen how the women in the works of all three artists have been both victims and victimizers, the threatened and the threatening. We have traced in each case how that dual existence emerged as each artist arrived at the subject of woman in the course of his struggle to solve aesthetic problems and find his own style. We have seen how the images that resulted from his efforts both reflect and illuminate the images of women in other media and in American life. Implicit in such a discussion is an appeal that we learn how to "read" images of women in painting so that they tell us about the culture, directly or indirectly, as we study the evolution of styles in art.

At the risk of oversimplifying a complex history, we might summarize the development of the image of American woman as found in these three artists as a history consisting of three stages. This three-stage evolution may be seen as a kind of mirror of the cultural history of America from about the mid-forties to the present. De Kooning's *Woman I*, in this context, may be seen to summarize the images of the strong, independent, gloriously dominant women who populated American film and literature as well as American life during the 1930's and the war years (think of Ma Joad, Mrs. Miniver, women in the plays of Clifford Odets and Elmer Rice, Jewish and Italian and Scandinavian mamas, career women played by Jean Arthur and Katherine Hepburn, the roles of Bette Davis, Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosie the Riveter). By 1950-52, however, that independent type was already being displaced by another, as Mom's strength in the face of hardship (wonderful during the trying years of depression and war) was beginning to look slightly ridiculous in an era of affluence—and more than slightly threatening to the sons of the new generation. De Kooning's Woman is a transitional figure, summarizing the positive attitudes of the era past and anticipating the propensity to ridicule of the era emerging.

In the second stage, Wesselman's figures sum up the effect of the Feminine Mystique on women at about the same time its influence had reached its height (Friedan's book was published in 1963, the year in which Wesselman painted *Great American Nude No. 51*); his figures appear passive, dependent, suburban, the consumers of the consumer culture, surrounded by products, utterly lacking in identity except as sex objects. This is the era when "women's films" and "women's magazines" helped define a *separate* identity for women, when home and child care became major preoccupations of middle-class women, who left their jobs and college to become full-time suburban housewives. It was a time when the film images replacing those independent, dominant types were two different versions of dependence: the wholesome Doris Day-Debbie Reynolds Good-Good Girl and the Marilyn Monroe Good-Bad image of vulnerability. The glamour image of Elizabeth Taylor set the ideal, and Jacqueline Kennedy supplied a substitute for Eleanor's image as The President's Wife. Feminine grace and desirability, not independence, became the new ideal to strive for.

The third stage reveals what has happened to the women of the fifties who were still trying to live by the glamour mystique and the youth mystique a decade later. Lindner's paintings belong, like the plays of Edward Albee and novels of the black humorists, to a generation with a sensitivity to the grotesque and to the cruel emptiness in American life. Elizabeth Taylor has turned into Martha in WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? Bette Davis has turned into Baby Jane. Lolita and the teeny-bopper and the Barbie doll emerge to lower the age of women still further. Housewives who had lived by the Feminine Mystique tell of going mad (DIARY OF A MAD HOUSEWIFE, MEMOIRS OF AN EX-PROM QUEEN), and literature is populated with images of disintegration and death. Marilyn Monroe dies, and Sylvia Plath. The Great American Bitch has become a cliche in the fiction of male authors, and Norman Mailer's hero kills off his wife and goes scot-free. It is a terrifying image of themselves that American women see, and Lindner's harsh, uncompromising portraits shriek out the warning to them: Someone is trying to tell you something—you ought to be paying attention.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ELEVEN

David Sylvester, ed., "De Kooning's Women," RAMPARTS, April, 1969, p. 24.

[2] Illustrated in Thomas B. Hess, WILLEM DE KOONONG (New York Brazillier, 1959).

[3] Thomas B. Hess, WILLEM DE KOONING (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1968), p. 77.

[4] Rolf Gunter Dienst, RICHARD LINDNER (New York: Abrams, 1970), p. xvii.

[5] Judith Wolfe, "Jungian Aspects of Jackson Pollack's Imagery," ARTFORUM, November, 1972, pp. 65ff.

[6] "De Kooning's Year," NEWSWEEK, March 10, 1969, pp. 88-93.

[7] Andrew Forge, "De Kooning's Women," STUDIO INTERNATIONAL, December, 1968, p. 248.

[8] Sylvester, p. 24. See the entire passage quoted.

[9] "De Kooning's Year," p. 93.

[10] See, for example, the article by Tom Prideaux, "Anti-Mom Pile-Up Has Become Just Plain Dull," in LIFE Magazine, May 10, 1963. Of that theatre season, Prideaux wrote: "On the U.S. stage the parade of pernicious mothers made a grand start with Mrs. Phelps, who tried to destroy both her sons' marriages in Sidney Howard's 1926 hit THE SILVER CORD. Then came Amanda Wingfield, who stifled her children with too much gentility in Tennessee Williams' THE GLASS MENAGERIE; Violet Venable, devoured her son like a Venus flytrap in Williams' SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER; Mary Tyrone, who blighted her sons' youth with her dope addiction in Eugene O'Neill's LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT; Mommy, who castrated her son in Edward Albee's THE AMERICAN DREAM; and now Arthur Kopit's evil, hilarious Madame Rosepetal from OH DAD, POOR DAD, MAMA'S HUNG YOU IN THE CLOSET AND I'M FEELING SO SAD.

"This season has weighed in with Peter Feibleman's TIGER, TIGER, BURNING BRIGHT, whose domineering mother unwittingly sends her sons into theivery and male prostitution; Lillian Hellman's MY MOTHER, MY FATHER, AND ME, wherein another mother's maniacal selfishness shatters her whole family; and DEAR ME, THE SKY IS FALLING, in which a bossy mother almost wrecks her daughter's marriage until a sympathetic psychiatrist sets her straight. What makes this latter situation even more fantastic is that the mother is played by Gertrude Berg, who as Molly Goldberg was for years the symbol of warm, lovable motherhood. Now suddenly with nuisance she's loaded."

[11] See Dolores Barracano Schmidt and Judith Gustafson essays on the Great American Bitch in Volume One and Chapter Six, above, respectively.

[12] Hess, 1959, pp. 122-3; and Hess, 1968, p. 100.

[13] "Big City Dames," TIME, April 6, 1953, p. 80.

[14] Hilton Kramer, "A Career Divided," NEW YORK TIMES, Sunday, March 9, 1969, p. D25.

[15] On the other hand, we—or rather I—am less inclined to let certain male critics off so easily. Mary Ellman's term for the attitudes betrayed by male literary commentators, "phallic criticism," seems apt for some of our findings. For instance, a critic who asserts that Lindner was fascinated by the "perhaps dominant role played by women in American society," quoted as an epigraph to this chapter, is wrong not only about the facts, but probably about Lindner's own perception of these facts. Another who says de Kooning's women can "induce real genital panic" is subtly implying that the public for art is male. We shall see how a third manages to indict the artist's mother for the threatening aspects of *Woman I*, and how a fourth can blame the woman in the paintings (rather than their creator) for threatening men—indeed, for "attacking men with her sex" when in fact not a single work shows such an assault. The silliest moment of phallic criticism occurs when a male critic manages to blame Marilyn Monroe—and by extension all women who, like her, "wanted" to remain in a "play-world" forever and never grow up—for her own death. As to those critics male and female, who write of such works as if the choice of woman as subject were incidental to the choice of color and line and medium and the "influences" on the artist, they would be like an art historian who manages to talk about *Guernica* as if the subject of war and Picasso's outrage were incidental to his contribution in this work to the history of cubism, the techniques of black/white collage, and the esoteric code-language of symbolism. (I put these observations into a footnote partly to underscore the fact that my sensitivity to the subtle sexism of male critics is not necessarily shared to the same extent by Ms. Mendez and Ms. Plummer—BC.)

[16] J.J., Review in ART NEWS, April, 1964, p. 13.

[17] Hess, 1968, p. 100.

[18] Forge, pp. 246-8.

[19] Quoted in Delden Rodman, CONVERSATIONS WITH ARTISTS (New York: Putnam, 1961,, p. 102.

[20] See especially William Faulkner; cf. his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, with its emphasis on man's capacity to endure, and his description in THE SOUND AND THE FURY of Dilsey: "They endured."

[21] "De Kooning's Year," p. 88.

[22] Wesselman quoted in John Rublowsky, POP ART (New York: Basic, 1965), pp. 134ff. Subsequent page references quoting Wesselman are to this source.

[23] Interestingly, in *Great American Nude No. 48* (1963), Wesselman pastes a reproduction of a matisse painting on the bedroom wall.

[24] John Russell and Suzi Gablik, POP ART REDEFINED (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 54.

[25] Harold Rosenberg, THESANXIOUS OBJECT (New York: Horizon, 1964).

[26] Lucy R. Lippard, POP ART (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 111-12.

[27] Udo Kulterman has stated that Wesselman's "objected female bodies" are "based on the kind of image created by the contemporary mass media..." in his THE NEW PAINTING (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 18.

[28] Grace Glueck, "Who's Minding the Easel?" ART IN AMERICA, January, 1968, p. 113.

[29] Dienst, p. v.

[30] Quoted in Dore Ashton, RICHARD LINDNER (New York: Abrams, 1970), p. 52.

31Ashton, p. 16.

32Wieland Schmied, "The Human Being as Toy," STUDIO, December, 1968, pp. 252-55.

33Schmied is wrong. Lindner's women are threatening, as we shall see, but they do not "attack" men at all. Rather, men and women, when they appear in the same works, tend to pass without seeing each other, stare past each other, turn their backs, make efforts as communication that are pretence—all of which Schmied himself points out (p. 253). He seems here to blame women for their own death, and for their innocence too, the way Leslie Fiedler announced (honest to God) that Lolita is to blame for "seducing" Humbert Humbert. Schmied develops the concept of the human being as toy in Lindner's work (supporting his argument by the fact that Lindner himself had an extensive toy collection), yet when he comes to deal with *woman*, he abandons his concept of her as a toy manipulated by society and characterizes her as a victimizer of men.

34The "cold glance" is one of the characteristics of the attitude of the grotesque in its purist, most classic form, according to Wolfgang Kayser in DAS GROTESQUE, definitive work on the subject (interestingly, also a German). Few Americans have been capable of adopting so coldly detached an attitude; Lindner and Albee stand out as exceptions.

On the subject of sado-masochism, Nancy Delgado and Margene Ludwig include Lindner in the scope of their book, WOMEN AND MASOCHISM, now in manuscript form. Agreeing with much of our analysis—the stress on woman as victim and victimizer in particular—the authors call attention to Lindner's works as insights not only into his own emotional life (They claim that "Art for him was a sensual experience, a form a controlled sexuality, offering some degree of wish-fulfillment for fantasies normally frustrated by moral inhibitions, thereby compensating for an otherwise unfulfilled emotional life."), but also into the sado-masochistic relationship between the sexes (a competitive struggle for power and dominance) that they believe is fundamental to an understanding of American culture. Since their concern is primarily for the psychology of the individual, as opposed to our concern with the relationship of art to society, it is statements like the following, made by Lindner, which draw their attention: "...every citizen is a secret criminal, our personal secrets are outside tribal laws...Every woman is raped many times a day—people simply take things and put them somewhere out of sight and that is what they call order—people always transporting themselves and things from one end of the city to another in a kind of senseless ebb and flow keeping themselves busy with enormous activity, going about importantly on all kinds of errands which are serious nonsense, but they are all caught up in the same brief trap between life and death." quoted in Ashton, p. 63.

35The phrase is Ashton's, p. 56, describing *119th Division*, but I should like to use this occasion to quote this amusing passage from Arlene Mendez's original essay: "As one would not fail to recognize the jumbo mammae of a de Kooning, or the preposterous suction-cup nipples of Wesselman's nudes, so Lindner breasts would be hard to mistake. In *Disney Land* my favorites appear. Here the breasts form part of an animal-like mask, with the concentric circles of the areola and nipple, imitating the iris and pupil, peering out from in front of the women like startled prying eyes in search of the enemy. Again in *West 48th Street* (1964) we have the isolated figure of a street-walker, heavily insulated with helmet-like hat, long gloves, and high, buckled collar, but with her breasts popping up and out of her tight, corset-like garment, embellished with two albino eyes. Although her hat and mask-like make-up hide her own eyes, her breasts confidently lead the way."

[36] In Ashton, pp. 37, 57-8. Ashton states, "If he describes a vain woman trying on hats at Saks, he does so with a certain jubilant admiration for her self-absorption. But if he describes men trying on clothes at Brooks Brothers, their wives hovering in the background, he makes them seem ridiculous. Men, he says, go to Brooks Brothers with their wives, but they sneak to Bonwit Tellers alone, to try on their fantasies, which, as he always says, are boys' fantasies." (pp. 57-8)

[37] See Caryl Rivers, "Why Can't Hollywood See That 35 Is Beautiful Too?" NEW YORK TIMES, Sunday, April 1, 1973, p. D13, who says, "Wayne, Stewart, Grant, Gable loved on, while their female contemporaries took up gardening or weirdo roles. Bette Davis became grotesque Baby Jane, Joan Crawford chopped off heads with an ax. Rita Hayworth, who starred in GILDA with Glen Ford in 1946, had a bit part 20 years later in a bomb called THE MONEY TRAP, in which she played Ford's beat-up ex-girlfriend. But this time Ford save his passion for nubile Elke Sommer. And Elizabeth Taylor seems permanently ensconced in the role of aging neurotic bitch." Citing what Susan Sontag has called the "double standard of aging," she notes that while her middle-aged husband can find plenty of role-models in film and on TV, she is at a loss. "Who will my role-model be? Mrs. Robinson of THE GRADUATE, lusting after young male flesh (Dirty Old Woman is a favorite image for the middled-aged woman, a la Vivien Leigh, panting for Warren Beatty in THE ROMAN SPRING OF MRS. STONE, or the horny ladies of MIDNIGHT COWBOY.) Can I identify with Elizabeth Taylor as Martha...Or Edith the dingbat in ALL IN THE FAMILY? Or Sylvia Miles destroying herself in HEAT? The women in the soap operas who gossip ad nauseum about who is doing what and to whom? Where do I see a reflection of the middle-aged women I know in real life, many of them strong, capable, funny, bright, interesting?" With a few exceptions, middle-aged women in the media fall into one of these three characterizations: (1) The Loser-neurotic-bitch, (2) The Grotesque: ax murderess-clown-mother-in-law, (3) The Wife ("pouring coffee...DULL, DULL, DULL"). The media not only fail to supply middle-aged women with role-models of a positive sort, but by continually presenting these totally undesirable images, TV and films can "manufacture self-hate" in women. "If women are continually instructed that the loss of youth is the supreme tragedy and leads to drink and self-loathing, how many will be able to resist the suggestion?"

CHAPTER TWELVE

Getting Even with the Genteel Tradition

BETTY E. CHMAJ
with
JUDITH A. GUSTAFSON

It was Santayana who gave us the term "the Genteel Tradition" in the title of his most famous essay, two paragraphs of which I quoted in Part III of Volume One. It was Santayana too in this same essay who equated that tradition with a "female" half of an American "divided mind." Like other analysts of American character before and since, Santayana saw a split in the national psyche dividing what he called the American Will from the American Intellect—a division not unlike the usual split others have found between American materialism and idealism, pragmatism and puritanism, the traditions descending from Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards. What the Will had achieved he saw symbolized in the skyscraper, domain of the American man, and it was "all aggressive enterprise." What the Intellect had yielded was the colonial mansion, domain "at least predominantly" of the American woman, and the result was the Genteel Tradition.

Contrary to first impression, Santayana did not intend through his choice of metaphor to compliment American women by suggesting that they had contributed more than American men to the nation's intellectual life; what he intended, rather, was to insult the nation's intellectual life by associating it with the domain of "mere" woman, suggesting thereby that she was somehow to blame for representing and ruling over, although not herself creating, the Genteel Tradition he found so unattractive a development in American philosophy. It never seems to have occurred either to him or to others who have identified American gentility and its restrictions with the "feminine" side of the national character to ask the woman herself whether she was content with the tradition she was presumed to represent, to require, and to rule over. Had the critics done so, by exploring both factual and fictional evidence about the women of the era, they would have discovered that the women often enough felt themselves the victims rather than the victors when the Genteel Tradition triumphed, and that many of them sought in their own ways to defy, circumvent, or—escape being impossible—take their revenge upon the Genteel Tradition for imposing its restrictions on their lives. Some of the evidence on the theme—as in the case of Henry Nash Smith's report on dime-novel heroines—has been around for years, if only we had known how to interpret what it was all along telling us; but only now is the full story of the defiance of the tradition being told, in terms of the secret or vaunted motivations of these women and the hardships they endured as punishment for their pains.

Since defiance makes good copy, and defiance by a woman is bound to make good drama, one should not be surprised, at first glance, to discover so many Defiant Ones among the female characters in dime novels, domestic novels, movies about suffering women or independent women, or in such popular drama as the musical ANNIE GET YOUR GUN (in which Annie's gun serves as a telling symbol of her defiance of the female role, even when she admits you can't get a man with one). But recent evidence on the real, as opposed to popular-fictional, lives of women seems to suggest that defiance can also make a Notable American Woman, that is, if she doesn't go under when caught in the fell clutch of circumstance. "Anything you can do I can do better," Annie sings to Frank in the musical—and proves it by out-shooting him. "Given adversity, women can do anything," reads the headline of the NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW article on the three-volume biographical dictionary NOTABLE AMERICAN WOMEN, 1607-1950. Helen Vendler, the reviewer, goes on to cite the array of cases in point:

> It is hard to think of a work at once more encouraging and depressing than this collection of some thirteen-hundred life stories. The stories prove that women can do practically anything; and they prove so far, they tend to be pushed to do it only by awful adversity or, on the other hand, by spinsterhood.
>
> Before you can become a Notable Woman, if you have followed the usual social pattern and married in your twenties, you have to suffer untold adversity: you find your husband dead of a bullet wound, "an apparent suicide," and learn that your family's fortune is "utterly spent"; or your husband dies after confinement in an Italian lazaretto, leaving you with five children; or you are widowed at 20; or you get married at 14, are divorced at 1[illegible], and are left with a child to support; or your four children all die successively in infancy; or of your 12 children only three live beyond their 33rd birthday, and of these, two die insane—these events, and the psychological convulsions following them, enough to destroy most women, force certain souls into an even more convulsive constructive effort, and a Notable American Woman is born.[1]

But a woman's defiance of her role is also very threatening to men and women alike who have accepted the premises of the Genteel Tradition, so "all the happy endings" in tales of fictional defiance require that the woman accede to the man's ego as Annie Oakley finally does, so that he and the no-longer-defiant heroine are seen walking hand in hand toward the sunset, toward the altar, toward acquiescence in the Genteel Tradition. In real life, as the biographies of the Notable American Women reveal, as Joseph Lash's volumes (and, for that matter, Elliot Roosevelt's) on one particular Notable American Woman appear to underscore, there are few such "happy endings" to be found among women of distinction. Instead, there is notability, won with pain.

THREE ALTERNATIVES TO THE GENTEEL TRADITION

What could—or **can**—American women do who would resist the pressures of the Genteel Tradition upon their lives? In this chapter, we wish to set side by side statements made about literature, film and television by Henry Nash Smith, Leslie Fiedler, Helen Waite Papashvily, Barbara Welter, Pauline Kael, Ann Wood, Jerry Vermilye and TIME Magazine. From these, three alternatives to the Genteel Tradition emerge.

The first of these alternatives was escape. Just as men lit out for the territory to escape Eastern gentility, so did some women, imitating the male pattern. We know now that there were many more women who found freedom in the West than previous evidence has revealed; we know that they participated significantly in the growth of the West, serving in public office and acting in positions of authority that in the East would have been reserved for males. We also know there were many real-life Annie Oakleys, Calamity Janes and Hurricane Nells whose strength of character was a source of admiration as much as (so we have been taught to believe) amusement. Men were among their most ardent fans, in fact. For many of these women, the decision to turn their backs on the chance for a man or home or family, under the terms dictated by the Genteel Tradition, was a painful one. Yet they preferred retaining their independence, even if they risked being branded as eccentric.

In his chapter, "The Dime Novel Heroine," in VIRGIN LAND: THE AMERICAN WEST IN SYMBOL AND MYTH, Henry Nash Smith acknowledged the importance of women even in the saga of the dime-novel Western, whose theme was escape from Eastern gentility for the rough adventure of the "wild" West:

> The escape of the Western story from the canons of gentility had greater consequences for the women characters than for the men, because the genteel female had been the primary source of refinement in the traditional novel. One method of transforming the heroine from the merely passive sexual object she had tended to be in the Leatherstocking tales was to introduce a supposed Indian girl able to ride and shoot who later proves to be an upper-class white girl captured long ago by the Indians....
>
> A much more promising means of effecting real development in the heroine was the ancient device of introducing a women disguised as a man, or wearing male attire....[2]

Smith traces the variations on the theme of the man-like heroine and the development of the genre of the woman-centered dime novel, focusing upon specific examples. One of these is Hurricane Nell:

> The transference of the skills and functions of the wild Western hero to a woman, the use of the theme of revenge to motivate violence, and the promotion of the Amazon to full status as a heroine are all exemplified in Edward L. Wheeler's Hurricane Nell, who appeared in 1878 almost simultaneously with the first appearance of Deadwood Dick. At the opening of the story Nell is the conventional distressed female, victim of the ruffian Bob Woolf's cruelty in firing her house and hastening the death of her parents. She swears the customary oath of vengeance and reappears after a time in the Pike's Peak mining towns wearing men's clothing, a mistress of all the accomplishments of the Wild West. She can out-run, out-shoot, out-lasso, and out-yell any man in town....
>
> The tendency to make the Amazon athletic might seem likely to detract from her feminine charms, but Wheeler does not mean to surrender this source of interest. He takes pains to make Hurricane Nell overwhelmingly beautiful, gives her lustrous eyes a soft, dreamy, wistful expectancy when she looks at the hero, and indulges in a touch of sadism by having her dangled over a five by her torturers....[3]

Wheeler's formula in exploiting all possibilities in attracting an audience, largely a male audience, was to be repeated in the films of a later generation.

Nell's "athleticism" is of interest because she defies gentility and becomes a *curiosity*, an exception (and thus not really a threat): she can perform better than men on their own turf. The allure of her "femininity" becomes a *special* kind of appeal as well, the torture scenes pandering to perverse erotic tastes. Both appeals were exploited by the movies and television, and it is interesting to reexamine familiar scenes from Westerns involving women from such a viewpoint. (Think of JOHNNY GUITAR, in which Joan Crawford is assigned something of the same kind of double identity given Hurricane Nell.)

Leslie Fiedler, in making his familiar distinction between the stereotypes in American literature of Good Good Girls and Good Bad Girls, does, in fact, call attention to the link between high and low literary sources to each other and to the movies later on. The Good Bad Girl of serious literature, for instance, he sees as

> ...an improbable sister to the hard-riding, hard-shooting, sometimes cigar-smoking, heroines of the dime novel; for in serious literature and the popular paperback alike, the Good Bad Girl, with her heart of truest gold beneath the roughest of exteriors, survives to become a stock character of the movies, a living embodiment of the American faith that evil is appearance only. Model or waitress or dance-hall girl, the modern version of the falsely impugned Maiden is discovered staggering drunk in the roue's penthouse, watched climbing with overnight bag the gangplank to the philanderer's yacht, followed by the camera as she slips from table to table, embrace to embrace...—only to be revealed at the dénouement as virginal though indescreet. She represents an American, which is to say, an expurgated recasting of the continental image of the virtuous whore, a Grushenka with a maidenhead....[4]

But not all of the women who reject gentility in favor of Good Bad images are whores—nor is their ownership of whorehouses or saloons in the films necessarily used as a reflection upon them as falsely impugned maidens who just couldn't help themselves. Often, as with Kitty in GUNSMOKE or the role magnificently played by Katy Jurado in HIGH NOON, they manage to combine images of self-sufficient entrepreneurs with their identities as heroines attracted to the central male characters.

Elsewhere in his volume LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL, Fiedler calls attention to the fact that while the sentimental novel, with which he primarily deals, was staple fiction for female audiences, the dime novel was read largely by men. Compare this observation on literature with the comment by Pauline Kael on film as she describes seeing the movie BILLY JACK:

> Though the audience I saw BILLY JACK with was almost all male, it responded happily to the independent, tough-talking girls. It is a curious fact of movie history (and one that may be lost sight of) that, in general, the men always did like the independent women. It was the women who like the sobbing and suffering ladies. (My father's favorite actresses were Joan Blondell and Barbara Stanwyck; my mother's were Helen Hayes and Ruth Chatterton.)...Those sacrificial tear-jerkers were often highly refined in tone, and they could seem serious and worthwhile, whereas it was very difficult to know what to do with the tart, independent women except in wisecracking comedies or in men's action films, in which the shady ladies could be tough.[5]

The fact that the strong, independent types—whether the tough-talking, hard-riding, out-shooting heroines of Westerns (books or films) or the wise-cracking career women in films of the 1930s and '40s or the shady-lady types of men's action films and television programs—were liked by men does not mean they were *dis*liked by women; rather, the genre in which they appeared might be conceded to be a masculine genre (dime novel, male drugstore fiction, Western or gangster film), which the women were not interested in. In the male-dominated film industry, it is interesting that even during the eras when dependent and vulnerable types were abundantly in view, the Academy Awards would go to the "exceptions" to such types—i.e., to the strong, independent women!

A SECOND ALTERNATIVE: FANNY FERN'S ADVICE

The blues singer sings the blues "to drive the blues away." That the artist creates his art to find release from the suffocations and depressions imposed by living in a bourgeois society, under the sway of a genteel tradition, is a thesis familiar to the discussion of the arts in general. That the American male artist sought release from American gentility by writing, especially by writing books in which women did not appear, is also a familiar subject. (Here Carolyn Heilbrun and Leslie Fiedler would agree; both acknowledge that the "masculine wilderness of the American novel" is a feature that has made our literature different from the rest of the Western world. But the two have, predictably, different ideas of whom to blame.[7])

What has not been adequately discussed is the degree to which women artists and authors, whose need for escape and revenge was all the greater (for the reasons Henry Nash Smith implies), used the act of creating works of art as a similar means of release. In a fascinating discussion of the "scribbling women" (as Hawthorne called them, resenting their dominance of the literary market) of the early nineteenth century, Ann Wood points out that most of this legion of women writers justified their activity essentially by dissembling—"hiding behind a conventional 'feminine' facade." Only one author refused to do so, "Fanny Fern," whose works (now forgotten) were sensations in their day. Fanny Fern's novel RUTH HALL, in fact, shocked many by telling the story of a woman writer's trials and tribulations to achieve success, questioning "the validity and value of a genteel tradition..."[8] (This novel and its author were singled out by Hawthorne as exceptions to the "d—d mob of scribbling women" he so detested.) Wood's findings on Fanny Fern's reasons for writing will serve nicely to exemplify a second way of getting even with the genteel tradition, one practiced by many who did not admit their motives as frankly as did the popular author herself.

Wood reports that even after the appearance of RUTH HALL, Fanny Fern "went on talking frankly, if hysterically, about why women should write. Time after time, she expressed not only the financial but the emotional needs and frustrations that drove her and her sisters to the pen..." For example, she entered as argument this incomparable passage:

> Look around, and see innumberable women, to whose barren and loveless lives this would be improvement and solace, and I say to them, write!...write! it will be a safe outlet for thoughts and feelings that maybe the nearest friend you have has never dreamed had place in your heart and brain....it is not *safe* for the women of 1867 to shut down so much that cries out for sympathy and expression, because life is such a maelstrom of business of folly or both, that those to

> whom they have bound themselves, body and soul, recognize only the needs of the former...One of these days when that diary is found, when the hand that penned it shall be dust, with what amazement and remorse will many a husband, or father, exclaim, I never knew my wife, or my child, till this moment. (AQ, p. 24)

Of which passage, Wood says: "Fanny Fern is frankly urging women to write both to compensate themselves for male cruelty and to reproach the men who exercise it....But, finally, Fanny Fern is saying, women must write simply to survive, and the sources of her own hysteria become clearer as she exclaims:

> Write!...to lift yourselves out of the dead-level of your lives...to lessen the number who are yearly added to our lunatic asylums from the ranks of misappreciated, unhappy womanhood, narrowed by lives made up of details. Fight! Oppose it, for your own sake's and your children's!

She is proclaiming loudly," Wood concludes, that writing "...provided for women a way *out of* the home, and a campaign, even a crusade, against the men who wanted to keep them there" (AQ, p. 24).

Here, then, was a second alternative to the genteel tradition, and the possibility Fanny Fern raised about diaries written in secret that might later be discovered by repentant men (and others) might be extended to the present if we speculate on the effect of such discoveries upon readers of Sylvia Plath or of DIARY OF A MAD HOUSEWIFE or MEMOIRS OF AN EX-PROM QUEEN—to pick three modern examples at random.

A THIRD ALTERNATIVE: SUBVERSION THROUGH SUFFERING

"This is the big payoff—to end up with everybody watching in tears at the end," says a writer for the daytime soap operas ONE LIFE TO LIVE and ALL MY CHILDREN. One of the actresses on ALL MY CHILDREN, Ruth Warwick, adds: "The main thing is trouble....They say you get happy roles on a soap opera—forget it. If you're a really happy character, you're going to be fired or killed or something's going to happen."[9] The daytime soaps of television, whose audience is primarily female, inherit a tradition that can be traced from the "domestic novels" (sentimental novels, women's novels) of the nineteenth century through the "women's films" of the movies and radio serials like HELEN TRENT and OUR GAL SUNDAY—a tradition whose dominant defining characteristic is the ability of its women characters to suffer, suffer, suffer.

As a means of coping with the genteel tradition, this alternative at first seems similar to the one just discussed; there is a great deal of suffering done by the women characters in the works of Fanny Fern. But Fern's alternative is a more familiar and, despite Wood's interpretation, less subversive means of responding to the genteel tradition than adhering to "The Code of Sudsville" as a reader, listener of viewer rather than as a writer. Fern sees the *act* of writing as salvation; the *content* of the works of the tradition of domestic novel, women's-film, radio-serial, television-soap-opera really constitutes a different avenue of release. And despite the comtempt this tradition has earned over the years from critics in all of the fields, the very persistence of the tradition and power of these works over women's minds is an index to their effectiveness.

For the stunning uncovering of the way these works functioned as a means of getting even with the genteel tradition, the credit goes to Helen Waite Papashvily in her volume, ALL THE HAPPY ENDINGS: THE DOMESTIC NOVEL

IN AMERICA (New York: Harper, 1956). So confident is Papashvily of her interpretation that she begins her book by contrasting the power of the domestic novel against the famous Seneca Falls convention which marked the beginnings of organized effort by women to get *out* of (not get even with) the genteel tradition. The "handful" of the brave at Seneca Falls, for all their achievement, come off second best:

> Nineteenth century women, if they were to achieve freedom in what seemed to them a hostile world, needed direction, inspiration, appreciation, reassurance, a sense of self-importance and of group unity, a plan of action.
>
> The Seneca Falls Convention supplied this to a few women but uncounted hundreds and thousands more found *their* Declaration of Rights, *their* Statement of Intentions within pages of the domestic novel.[10]

Not that men or women always knew, the way the Seneca women knew, that the domestic novel was a subversive handbook for revolt.

> No man, fortunately for his peace of mind, ever discovered that the domestic novels were handbooks of another kind of feminine revolt—that these pretty tales reflected and encouraged a pattern of feminine behavior so quietly ruthless, so subtly vicious that by comparison the ladies at Seneca appear angels of innocense. (p. xvi)
>
> ...why readers, mostly women, took such pleasure in crying over declines and deathbeds, sepulchers and cemeteries, no one attempted to explain. (p. 10)

The story Papashvily tells "begins" with the publisher G.P. Putnam bringing home a manuscript he and other male editors had dismissed as trash. The manuscript is in sorry physical shape by now, bearing the evidence of the disgust of publishers' readers who had rejected it. He gives it to his mother to read. She comes to him later, her eyes brimming with tears, to tell him if he never publishes anything else in his life, he should publish this book. The book is Susan Warner's THE WIDE, WIDE WORLD, which promptly becomes a great success and is followed by other "women's novels" by the host of women writers, who are now avidly sought by the formerly indignant publishers. Essentially all of their books are the same: centered in the home, with "the petty trials and small joys" of the common woman magnified to large propositions, her person glorified, "her every thought, action, gesture, chance word fraught with esoteric meaning and far-reaching significance," her difficult daily chores "imbued with dramatic significance" (p. xvi). The one thing these heroines could not abide, however grandly forgiving their natures was "how a man boasted and swaggered and threatened and promised and commanded—nor ever forgive that in the end he failed." Why did such stories retain such a hold on female readers?

> ...Catherine Putnam sensed THE WIDE WIDE WORLD's appeal because she and the author and the tremendous audience who wept over the pages for more than half a century shared a common lot. In a world made for men they were women. Law, custom, and theology told them they were inferior. Experience proved to them that they were not. Day after day, year after year women lived within the frustrating confines of this contradiction, and gathered "scattered sorrows," reasons to weep, from injustices they could not understand and customs they could not change. (pp. 10-11)

Rather than escaping to the West or some fringe world in which alternative modes of behavior might be accepted, the woman trapped in the confines of gentility, encouraged to live up to the Cult of True Womanhood—Barbara Welter's term for the code that dominated the period 1820-60—found her own way to take her revenge, all unconsciously, upon the Culture and the men who ruled it. The Cult required that she be *pure*; very well, her purity would demonstrate her superiority over men. Welter uses as example Eliza Farnham's words: "the purity of women is the everlasting barrier against which the tides of man's sensual nature surge."[10] There was the popular tale of "Lucy Dutton," by Fanny Forester, that told how Lucy "with the seal of innocence upon her heart" came out of her vine-covered cottage and met with a man. "And Lucy was beautiful and trusting, and thoughtless; and he was gay, selfish and profligate. Needs the story be told?...her innocence was no match for the sophistry of a gay, city youth! Spring came and shame was stamped upon the cottage at the foot of the hill." The baby dies, Lucy goes mad at the funeral and eventually dies herself. "Poor, poor Lucy Dutton! The grave is a blessed couch and pillow to the wretched...." To which Welter remarks: "The frequency with which derangement follows loss of virtue suggests the exquisite sensibility of woman, and the possibility that, in the woman's magazines at least, her intellect was geared to her mymen, not her brain" (p. 156). Papashvily is equally witty, pointing out that there was "no situation in a novel an attack of brain fever could not resolve, and determined young ladies even went so far as to die if they could prove their point in no other way." It happened that the same period that saw increased interest in scientific approaches to medicine, which brought the aches and pains suffered by women to the attention of physicians, also saw the version of the ideal woman—the Cult of True Womanhood—emerge. The coincidence proved too good an opportunity for women writers to pass up, and heroines began to contract all sorts of diseases in novels. Hysteria, "brain fever," was a common lot of nineteenth century women, one that caused much suffering. Papashvily says, "Ill health...was too valuable a weapon to relinquish" as a means of revealing the heroine's capacity to suffer. The number of scenes in television soap operas today that take place in hospital sick rooms illustrate the continuity of this part of the tradition.

The way the women made their *men* suffer, partly in order to show how faithfully they (the women) could serve as nurses and companions, is another part of the story Papashvily tells. The women (whether the authors themselves or their characters) would begin with their fathers, who might squander the family fortune or be so ungrateful as to become ill, requiring that the daughter work and nurse him at the same time. The fact is that an amazing number of the women writers did come to enjoy fame and a secure income after being forced into writing to save their fathers from bankruptcy, or after becoming suddenly widowed, or after their dastardly husbands left them to fend for themselves. Much of the material for the stereotyped plots could thus be drawn from personal experience. Papashvily tells how the husband of one author grew more and more "to resemble the creature of his wife's imagination," until he actually reached such a wretched physical state under her constant ministering that his physician son declared him "a miserable hypochondriac—unfit for work." Papashvily concludes: "Those women who were not fortunate enough to get a bad husband had to make one" (p. 94).

However: "To maim the male, to deprive him of the privilege of slavery and the pleasure of alcohol was not, of course, enough. Female superiority at the same time had to be established and maintained." She accounts how this was variously accomplished in novels and real lives (p. 95ff). Comparing Mrs. E.D.E.N. Southworth's plots to those of Mrs. Hentz:

> Mrs. Hentz maimed the husband. Mrs. Southworth removed him entirely. This plan had several advantages. A martyred wife deserved and usually won the sympathy and approval of her circle....She had, if she were circumspect, almost complete freedom of action. When her wanderer finally returned, as he always did abject and repentant, she enjoyed a day of justification and glory and a lifetime of moral superiority. (p. 115)

As a final example of a nineteenth century fictional character to represent this means of taking revenge on the Genteel Tradition, consider Elsie Dinsmore. With the exception of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn, "Elsie Dinsmore is probably the best known character ever to appear in American fiction," says Papashvily, yet few today have ever heard of her, unless they are well over fifty, say, and then they would probably explain, "Elsie was awfully good and her father made her play the piano or else wouldn't let her play the piano and Elsie sat on the piano stool until she fainted and fell on the floor and cracked her head open or got brain fever or something and *then* her father felt awful." Says Papashvily, "This in effect was the theme of the entire series." After many more stories, as Elsie ages, she keeps her control over all around her through her suffering. "...at eighty, surrounded by her children and grandchildren, [Elsie] remained a protected child who had never combed her own hair or put on her own slippers or raised her sweet voice. Yet she ruled her father, her husband, her children, and dominated her world with no other weapon than 'love' " (pp. 170-1, 178).

It has been pointed out that the little girl in the play and movie THE BAD SEED (1954) learned the innocent manner she simulates before adults by reading ELSIE DINSMORE. The fact and date are significant, for the 1950s bring back the Cult of True Womanhood by another name: the Feminine Mystique. Perfect little girls are once again desired as models who will grow into perfect wives and mothers. The idea of a "bad seed" used by William March is a weak explanation for the impact of the play and film on audiences, and the link to the earlier model is telling. Jerry Vermilye, in a biography of Bette Davis, becomes downright petulant over the poor regard in which "women's films" are held today, a contempt for the genre paralleling the contempt for women themselves that followed in the wake of the 1950s mystique; as I see it, THE BAD SEED simply allowed this contempt to extend to perfect little angel-children as well, and thus gave part of the show away.

Vermilye says that "many of Davis's best roles would now be dismissed as 'women's pictures,' once considered an important and respected genre on the production slate of every major Hollywood studio." In particular: "There are those who protest loudly when the term 'soap opera' is used for a better-than-average motion picture. Yet one of BetteDavis's most memorable performances is the neurotic Cinderella heroine of NOW, VOYAGER, without doubt among the finest soap operas ever produced in Hollywood....from the novel by Olive Higgins Prouty, author of that tear-jerking classic, STELLA DALLAS" (p. 85). In his chapter in this volume on film stereotypes, Joe Baunoch gives an important place to the Long-Suffering-Lady, whose capacity to endure in the face of incredible hardships through all those movies makes her the direct descendant of Papasvily's long-suffering heroines. But, as the name of Bette Davis suggests, this was a character that called for a strong actress in the part.

And here is an important point to observe about the third alternative to the genteel tradition, which I have called "subversion by suffering." Novels and films and television are very functional in a culture, of course, when they serve the age-old purpose of purging their audiences—not of pity and fear, in this case, but of the "scattered sorrows" that confuse and hurt and cannot be escaped. Pauline Kael, discussing the acumen of movie businessmen in creating the genre of "women's pictures," notes that women seldom wrote them or directed them "but they were shaped for women's tastes. They were lachrymose, masochistic, supposedly *realistic* stories about noble dames sacrificing everything for their lovers or husbands, or sometimes even for their lover's children by his wife. And though men usually hated them, a lot of women did like them" (Kael, p. 152). They went to them to weep—that was indeed the "payoff," as it came to be in soap operas: the really good films would be billed as "four-hanky productions." After the tears, it was easier for women to return to the problems they themselves confronted in their lives.

The word *masochism* is a key word in Kael's description, but it took a certain kind of strength, *turned against the self* rather than against the man to play the roles convincingly. Strong actresses often played both types of "emotive women" described on Baunoch's chart of categories. The fact that the same actress would play both kinds of roles—the good sufferer and the bad vixen—suggests that these were really two versions of the same kind of character. Indeed, in the pictures in which strong actresses play identical twins, one good and one evil, we have an even better clue—Bette Davis in A STOLEN LIFE and DEAD RINGER, Olivia de Havilland in DARK MIRROR.

Thus the distance between the first and third alternatives to the Genteel Tradition, which at first seemed to represent quite different kinds of choices are not, finally, that far apart. Psychologists long ago established (e.g., Kardiner and Ovesey in MARK OF OPPRESSION) that accomodation can be a form of aggression, and that an individual frustrated by the inability to take out hostilities against the culture (read **genteel tradition**) can as easily turn against the self as against the enemy to find release. Fiedler asserts that in American literature and film, the "lady with the whip" emerged side by side with the "long-suffering victim," the Dark Lady becoming the other half of the Fair Maiden. But in the end, the two are far more similar as rebels against gentility than might be supposed. Bette Davis played both roles, yet she was always Bette Davis. It is not accidental that she was nominated for Academy Awards as often for one kind of role as for the other—for JEZEBEL in 1938, then for DARK VICTORY in 1939; for THE LETTER and THE LITTLE FOXES in 1940 and 1941, respectively, and then for NOW, VOYAGER in 1942. (Vermilye, p. 135)

With the example of another "strong" actress, Katharine Hepburn, we come full circle in our survey of ways to revolt against gentility. For the most part, Hepburn would not play roles in which she acquiesced to the tradition—but in CHRISTOPHER STRONG she did. As Pauline Kael describes her surrender, it becomes clear that the real schism remains between those who sought revenge upon the Genteel Tradition or resisted it and those who, like the character she played, gave in.

> There was an unusual sequence in CHRISTOPHER STRONG, an arch, high-strung, sickeningly noble Katharine Hepburn movie back in 1933. Hepburn played a famous record-breading aviatrix, obviously modelled on Amelia Earhart, who fell in love with a distinguished political figure, a married man (Colin Clive). He was drawn to her

> because, unlike his conventionally feminine wife (Billie Burke), she had audacity and independence; he said that that was what he loved her for. But as soon as they went to bed together, he insisted, late on the very first night, that she not fly in the match she was entered in. There were many movies in the thirties in which women were professionals and the equals of men, but I don't know of any other scene that was so immediately recognizable to women of a certain kind as *their* truth. It was clear that the man wasn't a bastard, and that he was doing this out of anxiety and tenderness—out of love in his terms. Nevertheless, the heroine's acquiescence destroyed her. There are probably few women who have ever accomplished anything beyond the care of a family who haven't in one way or another played that scene. Even those who were young girls at the time recognized it, I think, if only in a premonitory sense. It is the intelligent woman's primal post-coital scene, and it's on film; probably it got there because the movie was written by a woman, Zoe Atkins, and directed by a woman, Dorothy Arzner. (Kael, p. 148)

The pattern Kael describes is the pattern of plot that became Hollywood's standard "happy ending" in most of its films about career women, showgirls who made it to the top, professional women of many kinds who threw over their success for their man. What stands out in these plots is the falseness of the surrender. (Rosalind Russell, hosting an occasion on television of awards to outstanding women, pointed out that in twenty-three films of career women, she had held every kind of job imaginable and at the end of all of the films, she gave up the job to "marry Fred MacMurray." Today, she said, speaking of 1973, she would have hung on to Fred MacMurray, "but I also would have hung on to the job." Applause followed.) In the present instance, the contrast between the pattern of plot in CHRISTOPHER STRONG and the real life of Amelia Earhart compounds the lie behind the devasting portrait Kael gives us. Here, in Earhart's example, was at least a case that reversed the relation of fact and fiction, making the great aviatrix sister to the dime novel heroines and sharpshooting women of the Westerns. The aviatrix modelled after her in CHRISTOPHER STRONG may have acquiesced; the real woman did not. She insisted on remaining the audacious, independent type men and women both admired. In real life, she made that intention explicit to her fiance the night before their marriage. She transgressed upon the "man's world," and she took the risk of being regarded as eccentric. In the end, she preferred lighting out for the territories in her own way—and took the greatest risk of all. The result was death—and notability.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWELVE

[1] Helen Vendler, "Given Adversity, Women Can Do Anything," THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW (September 17, 1972), p. 1.

[2] Henry Nash Smith, VIRGIN LAND: THE AMERICAN WEST IN SYMBOL AND MYTH (Cambridge: Harvard Uviversity Press, 1950), p. 126.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 130-1.

[4] Leslie Fiedler, LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL, rev. ed. (New York: Dell, 1969), pp. 308-10.

[5] Pauline Kael, "The Current Cinema," THE NEW YORKER (November 27, 1971), p. 148.

[6] Ann Wood, "The 'scribbling Women' and Fanny Fern: Why Women Wrote," AMERICAN QUARTERLY, Spring 1971, pp. 3-24.

[7] Carolyn Heilbrun, "The Masculine Wilderness of the American Novel," SATURDAY REVIEW, January 29, 1972, pp. 41-4. Heilbrun, referring to James Dickey's DELIVERANCE, sees it as "the latest in a series of fictional escapes into the 'territory' where women do not go, where civilization cannot reach...America, alone among nations of high culture, has been in its novels as in its live the great celebrator of the 'manly' virtues of aggressiveness and violence." (pp. 41, 44)

[8] Wood, p. 24. Fern is quoted from the NEW YORK LEDGER, August 10, 1867, with some additions in FOLLY AS IT FLIES, pp. 61-4.

[9] "The Code of Sudsville," TIME, March 20, 1972, pp. 93-4.

[10] Helen Waite Papashvily, ALL THE HAPPY ENDINGS (New York: Harper, 1956), p. xvii.

[11] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," AMERICAN QUARTERLY, XVIII, No. 2, Pt. 1 (Summer, 1966), pp. 151-74.

[12] Jerry Vermilye, BETTE DAVIS (New York: Pyramid Illustrated History of the Movies, Pyramid Press, 1973), pp. 72, 85.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

“Reversals in Our Thinking The Double Take and My Antonia

INTRODUCTION: THE DOUBLE TAKE AND THE TOTALLY NEW READING

BETTY E. CHMAJ

I have elected to conclude this volume with an essay by Blanche Gelfant on Willa Cather's MY ÁNTONIA, an essay that provides a brilliant illustration of what I am calling the Double-Take Phenomenon. By the Double-Take I simply mean the shock of recognition that rises when we realize that a familiar piece of evidence can be examined and interpreted from exactly the opposite point of view, or with sympathies different from those implicit in the accustomed context. Let me illustrate. Below is an item that appeared in a section of the Sunday funnies that has become completely familiar to Americans by now, Ripley's BELIEVE IT OR NOT, a column that collects items intended to prove that truth is stranger than fiction. Cheek by jowl with accounts of strange mutations in Nature, evidences of the occult and the seemingly unbelievable in human history appeared this piece of news, complete with capitalizations and exclamation points to suggest the strain upon our credibility:

My second example of the Double-Take is more chilling than amusing. It is taken from an advice column of the kind one finds in the daily newspapers, upon which, we are told, millions of women (and some men) depend for guidance on their system of values, on the decisions they make in their lives based upon these values. I do not mean my choice to be any worse than other examples others might find in almost any newspaper, almost any day. I offer it because it seems so obvious a case of a piece of evidence which, if examined from the opposite point of view prescribed by the doctor, screams for a different conclusion about the circumstances and a different kind of advice. The column, by Dr. Loriene Chase (with her picture attached), is headlined:

> HUSBAND'S TOUCH MAKES WIFE FLINCH
>
> WIFE: I am 21 and have been married for three years. My husband is 24 and we have an 8-month-old son. But I don't think I am in love with my husband any more—I resent him even trying to touch me. I wonder now if I ever loved him. What should I do? Leave him for someone I do love?
> DOCTOR: If you loved him in the beginning why do you think it has changed.
> WIFE: When we were first married he was very cruel to me. After frequent quarrels and absences from home, I had decided to leave

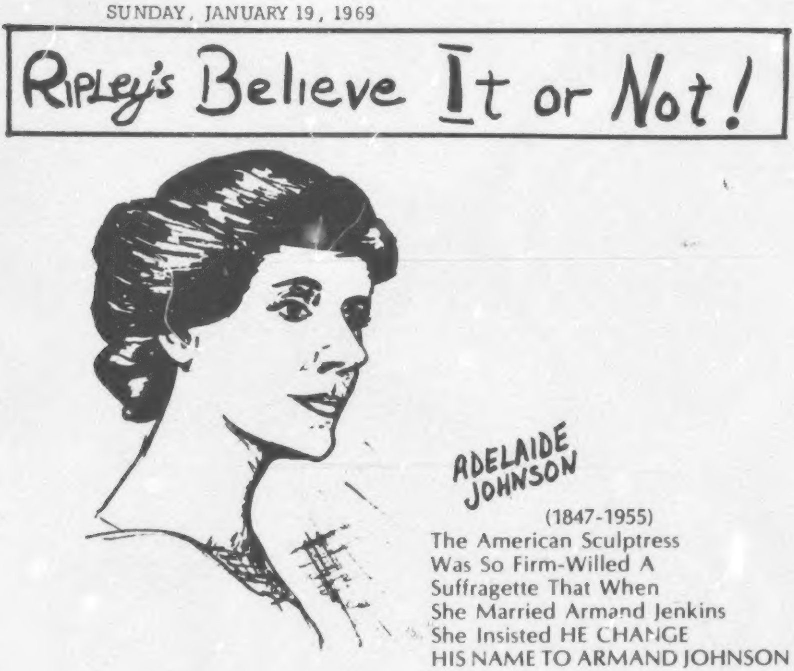

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 1969
Ripley's Believe It or Not!
ADELAIDE JOHNSON
(1847-1955)
The American Sculptress
Was So Firm-Willed A
Suffragette That When
She Married Armand Jenkins
She Insisted HE CHANGE
HIS NAME TO ARMAND JOHNSON

Figure 23: freehand reproduction by Georgia Green.

> him, until I learned of my pregnancy. At first he was resentful of my pregnancy. But after the baby was born and *he had a son*, he changed. He has become a proud father and a very good husband.

The wife goes on to explain, however, that she cannot feel any warmth toward him—her flesh "creeps" at her husband's touch—and meanwhile, she is fortunate: another man has turned up who offers an alternative. He is genuinely affectionate and understanding, and feels she should leave her husband for him. But she would feel guilty about doing so because of the child and the husband's recent change of behavior. What should she do?

> DOCTOR: I don't think you have tried to make your marriage a happy one as much as you think you have. It's possible that hostility has led you to "act out" your feelings with another man, because you haven't forgiven your husband for his abusive behavior toward you during the early stages of your marriage. You could also feel he changed only because of the birth of your baby. Now you must accept your responsibility to try to make the marriage work. Sever your relationship with the "other man." Your punishment of your husband for his earlier action is harsh and *unwomanly*. To err is

> human, to forgive is divine. This is an old cliche but it may bring new meaning to your marriage. (Emphasis added.)
> —Dr. Loriene Chase, "Husband's Touch Makes Wife Flinch," DETROIT FREE PRESS, August 11, 1972.

Other examples from the realm of journalism would not be hard to find. The LOS ANGELES TIMES carried an article with the headline, "Increase in Female Suicides Blamed on Lib Pressures." A report from a UCLA study showed female suicides went from 10 per 100,000 to "more than 14," the explanation being that the women's liberation movement "apparently" has produced the increase. "It is the price women are paying for becoming more involved outside the family and in the working arena," the study's author is paraphrased as saying, and then she is quoted directly:

> "Their drive for success and recognition has increased pressures and opened more possibilities for failure," said Miss Allen, "and they are facing crises once restricted to men, things like loss of self-esteem by not making it on the job, or by being fired."

It turns out the increase of four suicides per 100,000 "narrows" the male-female suicide ratio in the state of California "to less than 2 to 1. The male rate increased only slightly from 22 to about 23 per 100,000." The fact that men commit suicide almost twice as often as women is regarded as incidental, less newsworthy than the possibility shrieking in the headlines that women's lib is to "blame" for achieving at least some measure of equality in getting women into jobs and letting them take the same risks that men do (LOS ANGELES TIMES, May 5, 1973, p. 1).

On the other side of the ledger is the fear that the same women's liberation movement is, according to a headline in NATIONAL ENQUIRER, "Breeding a Society of Weak, Neurotic, Scared Men" (September 3, 1972, p. 2). A Dr. Robert Alsofrom, chief of volunteer services at the Palm Beach Mental Health Center, "a prominent Florida psychologist," is quoted:

> "Men are breaking up emotionally because they cannot withstand the challenges from women," he said.
>
> Males, who have been superior down through the ages, "are not prepared for it," he added....
>
> "Is this nation of power-hunting women prepared for a society littered with sick, neurotic, weak males?" asked Dr. Alsofrom. "Women are challenging the role of their men without realizing the consequences. They are tearing down the myth that they are frail creatures, deserving of special consideration and attention. At the same time they expect men to be big and tough and virile..."
>
> Dr. Alsofrom, 49, said he is counseling more and more men "who are completely lost and actually fear their wives. The wives, in turn lose respect for their husbands. They find nothing to respect in a fat, balding, disinterested figure who has lost his virility...But the husband has become this way because she challenged his position. And he has nothing to fight back with because his 'male superiority' was a myth in the first place."
>
> Furthermore, Dr. Alsofrom said, "if a man feels he cannot be a good mate for a woman in the physical sense, it's a fact of his makeup that he will suddenly feel he can't do anything."

One technique to expose the fallacies mixed in with the facts in such instances is to substitute the word *woman* for the word *man* in a number of the sentences, and substitute the expectations men make of women for those women make of men. Some basic assumptions about the way the sexes treat each other and what they are supposed to expect will come in for some basic challenges.

From such examples in journalism or in popular culture, one could move to examples in history and biography (or autobiography, which Gelfant uses to good purpose) in which the speaker, all unawares, is revealing in the data given or omitted an interpretation that may be the very opposite from the one that is being advanced. Once we learn to look twice and think twice as we read such material, everything from an arithmetic story problem to a heavy tome on mythology, psychology or literature is capable of producing the Double-Take. There is no question but that such forms of newly acquired awareness will be disconcerting; there will be times when the person who must learn to "stop, look and listen" all over again will resent having to relearn what in childhood he had come to accept; after a while, it may seem one cannot even read or speak without tripping over words and becoming suspicious over trivia. But as Blanche Gelfant eloquently puts it, we must learn to look at the "negations and evasions" that we discover through our rereadings: "Much as we would like to ignore them, for they bring painful confrontations, we must see what they would show us about ourselves...."

Gelfant here is speaking of one particular novel by one particular artist, but her method as well as her findings bear upon other areas of inquiry as well. Others could ask similar questions about the perspectives adopted in other works and question their reliability, as Gelfant questions Jim Burden. It is also significant that she has chosen a woman author, and that her inquiry extends to Cather's motivations and associations as well as Jim's. It is her painstaking, fulsome, and totally honest inquiry that makes this essay, first of all, an exemplary case study of the importance of confronting (in her phrase) "reversals in our thinking" that are now emerging as a result of the women's movement. As her careful analysis demonstrates, totally new readings of works of literature—and I would extend that to read totally new interpretations of evidence from many other areas as well—result from such "reversals," and we learn, as in the present case, "how we betray our past when we forget its most desquieting realities; how we begin to redeem it when we remember."

Some readers may not yet have read MY ÁNTONIA (I had not, when I first read Gelfant's essay, although I had somewhere along the line picked up precisely the interpretations of Cather she challenges at the outset). Since reading the essay, I have come to know the novel and Cather well, and I have a practical suggestion or two for those who teach or who are challenged by Gelfant's method to try it out on other examples or other media. One assignment I have tried on students, with mixed results, is to have them tell Jim Burden's story from Ántonia's perspective (and, to pair with that, write part of Jonathan's "diary" revealing how he sees the same incidents Bettina records in Sue Kauffman's DIARY OF A MAD HOUSEWIFE). I have used Cather's novel in a course on "Women in Film and American Culture," pairing it, for different reasons, with FARMER'S DAUGHTER, WESTWARD THE WOMEN, and other films about immigrant, pioneer and Western women, or—perhaps more effectively—with SALT OF THE EARTH and SOUNDER for images of strong, independent women living under harsh conditions whose life stories are viewed through sympathetic though potentially sentimental (nostalgic?) eyes. (The course syllabi in Part II of this volume and of Volume One of AMERICAN WOMEN AND AMERICAN STUDIES offer many other suggestions for using Cather in women's studies courses.)

Finally, by way of introducing Gelfant's essay and simultaneously concluding this book, I would see in this analysis yet another example of what I mean by the title of this volume, IMAGE, MYTH AND BEYOND. Ántonia represents one strong image of American women among the images available to study and to understand. She has become the central figure in a myth about the American past, "an affirmation of history" offered up in a work "long considered a representatively American novel." We can describe the image, we can come to see the myth as it operates in American culture. But Gelfant takes us "beyond"—beyond image and myth to the painful confrontations that will, I too believe, redeem our past by forcing us to accept its realities.

THE FORGOTTEN REAPING-HOOK: SEX IN MY ÁNTONIA

BLANCHE H. GELFANT
Professor of English
Dartmouth College

Our persistent misreading of Willa Cather's MY ÁNTONIA rises from a belief that Jim Burden is a reliable narrator. Because we trust his unequivocal narrative manner, we see the novel as a splendid celebration of American frontier life. This is the view reiterated in a current critique of MY ÁNTONIA[1] and in a recent comprehensive study of Cather's work: "MY ÁNTONIA shows fertility of both the soil and human beings. Thus, in a profound sense MY ÁNTONIA is the most affirmative book Willa Cather ever wrote. Perhaps that is why it was her favorite."[2] Critics also elect it their favorite Cather novel: however, they regret its inconclusive structure, as did Cather when she declared it fragmented and unsatisfactory in form.[3] David Daiches's complaint of twenty years ago prevails: that the work is "flawed" by "irrelevant" episodes and material of "uncertain" meaning.[4]

Both critical positions—that MY ANTONIA is a glorious celebration of American life and a defective work of art—must be reversed once we challenge Jim Burden's vision of the past. I believe we have reason to do so, particularly now, when we are making many reversals in our thinking. As soon as we question Jim's seemingly explicit statements, we see beyond them myriad confusions which can be resolved only by a totally new reading. This would impel us to reexamine Jim's testimony, to discover him a more disingenuous and self-deluded narrator than we supposed. Once we redefine his role, MY ANTONIA begins to resonate to new and rather shocking meanings which implicate us all. We may lose our chief affirmative novel, only to find one far more exciting—complex, subtle, aberrant.

Jim Burden belongs to a remarkable gallery of characters for whom Cather consistently invalidates sex. Her priests, pioneers, and artists invest all energy elsewhere. Her idealistic young men die prematurely; her bachelors, children, and old folk remain "neutral" observers. Since she wrote within a prohibitive genteel tradition, this reluctance to portray sexuality is hardly surprising. What should intrigue us is the strange involuted nature of her avoidance. She masks sexual ambivalence by certainty of manner, and displays sexual disturbance, even the macabre, with peculiar insouciance. Though the tenor of her writing is normality, normal sex stands barred from her fictional world. Her characters avoid sexual union with significant and sometimes bizarre ingenuity, or achieve it only in dreams. Alexandra Bergson, the heroine of O PIONEERS!, finds in recurrent reveries the strong transporting arms of a lover; and Jim Burden in MY ÁNTONIA allows a half-nude woman to smother him with kisses only in unguarded moments of fantasy. Their dreams suggest the typical solipsism of Cather's heroes, who yield to a lover when they are most solitary, most inverted, encaptured by their own imaginations. As Alexandra dispels such reveries by a brisk cold shower, their inferential meaning becomes almost comically clear. Whenever sex enters the real world (as for Emil and Marie in O PIONEERS!),[5] it becomes destructive, leading almost axiomatically to death. No wonder, then, that Cather's heroes have a strong intuitive aversion to sex which they reveal furtively through enigmatic gestures. In A LOST LADY, when young Niel Herbert, who idealizes the Forrester's sexless marriage, discovers Mrs. Forrester's love affair, he vents his infantile jealousy and rage the only way he can—symbolically. While the lovers are on the phone, he takes his "big shears" and cuts the wires, ostensibly to prevent gossip, but also to sever a relationship he cannot abide. Ingenious in rationalizing their actions, Cather's heroes do not entirely conceal an underlying fear of physical love; and the connection between love and death, long undiscerned in Cather's work, can be seen as its inextricable motif. Even in her first novel, ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE, the hero's gratuitous death—generally thought to flaw the work—fulfills the inherent thematic demand to show physical passion as disastrous. Here, as in O PIONEERS!, a later work, illicitness is merely a distracting irrelevance which helps conceal the fear of sexuality in all relationships. O PIONEERS! reduces the interval between love and death until they almost coincide. At three o'clock, Emil races "like an arrow shot from the bow" to Marie; for the first time they make love; by evening, they are dead, murdered by the half-demented husband.

In MY ÁNTONIA, Jim Burden grows up with an intuitive fear of sex, never acknowledged, and in fact, denied: yet it is a determining force in his story. By deflecting attention from himself to Antonia, of whom he can speak with utter assurance, he manages to conceal his muddied sexual attitudes. His narrative voice, reinforced by Cather's, emerges firm and certain; and it convinces. We tend to believe with Jim that his authoritative recitation of childhood memories validates the past and gives meaning to the present even though his mature years stream before him emptied of love, intimacy, and purpose. Memory transports him to richer and happier days spent with Antonia, the young Bohemian girl who signifies "*the country, the conditions, the whole adventure of...childhood*—with copper-red praries transformed to rich wheatfields and corn—his personal story seems to epitomize this larger historical drama. Jim uses the coincidence of his life-span with a historical era to imply that as the country changed and grew, so did he, and moreover, as his memoirs contained historical facts, so did they hold the truth about himself. Critics support Jim's bid for validity, pointing out that "MY ÁNTONIA exemplifies superbly [Frederick Jackson] Turner's concept of the recurring cultural evolution on the frontier."[7]

Jim's account of both history and himself seems to me disingenuous, indeed, suspect; yet it is for this very reason highly pertinent to an understanding of our own uses of the past. In the introduction, Jim presents his memoirs as a spontaneous expression—unselected, unarranged, and uncontrolled by ulterior purpose: "*From time to time I've been writing down what I remember...about Ántonia....I didn't take time to arrange it; I simply wrote down pretty much all that her name recalls to me. I suppose it hasn't any form,...any title, either*" (p. 2). Obviously, Jim's memory cannot be as autonomous or disinterested as he implies. His plastic powers reshape his experience, selecting and omitting in response to unconscious desires and the will. Ultimately, Jim forgets as much as he remembers, as his mind sifts through the years to retrieve what he most needs—a purified past in which he can find safety from sex and disorder.

Of "a romantic disposition," Jim substitutes wish for reality in celebrating the past. His flight from sexuality parallels a flight from historical truth, and in this respect, he becomes an emblematic American figure, like Jay Gatsby and Clyde Griffiths. Jim romanticizes the American past as Gatsby romantizes love, and Clyde money. Affirming the common, the prototypical, American dream of fruition, all three, ironically, are devastated—Gatsby and Clyde die violently, while Jim succumbs to immobilizing regressive needs. Their relationship to the dream they could not survive must strike us oddly, for we have reversed their situation by surviving to see the dream shattered and the Golden Age of American history impugned. Out of the past that Jim idealized comes our present stunning disorder, though Jim would deny such continuity, as Cather did. Her much-quoted statement that the world *broke* in 1922 reveals historical blindness mistaken for acuity.[8] She denied that "the beautiful past" transmitted the crassness, disorder, and violence which "ruined" the present for her and drove her to hermitic withdrawal. She blamed villainous men, such as Ivy Peters in A LOST LADY, for the decline of a heroic age. Like her, Jim Burden warded off broad historical insight. His mythopoeic memory patterned the past into an affecting creation story, with Ántonia a central fertility figure, "a rich mine of life, like the founders of early races."

Jim, however, stalks through his myth a wasteland figure who finds in the present nothing to compensate him for the loss of the past, and in the outer world nothing to violate the inner sanctum of memory. "Some memories are realities, are better than anything that can ever happen to one again"—Jim's nostalgic conclusion rationalizes his inanition. He remains finally fixated on the past, returning to the vast and ineffaceable image that dominates his memoirs—the Nebraska prairie yielding to railroad and plough. Since this is an impersonal image of the growth of a nation, and yet it seems so personally crucial to Jim, we must be alerted to the special significance it holds for him. At the very beginning of the novel, we are told that Jim "*loves with a personal passion the great country through which his railway runs*" (p. 2). The symbolism of the railroad penetrating virgin fields is such an embarrassingly obvious example of emotional displacement, it seems extraordinary that it has been so long unnoted. Like Captain Forrester, the unsexed husband of A LOST LADY, Jim sublimates by traversing the country, laying it open by rail; and because he sees the land grow fertile and the people prosper, he believes his story to be a celebration.

But neither history's purely material achievement, nor Cather's aesthetic conquest of childhood material, can rightfully give Jim Burden personal cause to celebrate. Retrospection, a superbly creative act for Cather, becomes for Jim a negative gesture. His recapitulation of the past seems to me a final surrender to sexual fears. He was afraid of growing up, afraid of women, afraid of the nexus of love and death. He could love only that which time had made safe and irrefragable—his memories. They revolve not, as he says, about the image of Ántonia, but about himself as a child. When he finds love, it seems to him the safest kind—the narcissistic love of the man for himself as a boy. Such love is not unique to Jim Burden. It obsesses many Cather protagonists from early novels to late: from Bartley Alexander in ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE to Godfrey St. Peter in THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE. Narcissism focuses Cather's vision of life. She valued above all the inviolability of the self. Romantically, she saw in the child the original and real self; and in her novels she created adult characters who sought a seemingly impossible reunion with this authentic being—who were willing to die if only they could reach somehow back to childhood.

Regression becomes thus an equivocal moral victory in which the self defies change and establishes its immutability. But regression is also a sign of defeat. MY ÁNTONIA, superficially so simple and clear a novel, resonates to themes of ultimate importance—the theme of identity, of its relationship to time, and of its contest with death. All these are subsumed in the more immediate issue of physical love. Reinterpreted along these lines, MY ÁNTONIA emerges as a brilliantly tortuous novel, its statements working contrapuntally against its meanings, its apparently random vignettes falling together to form a pattern of sexual aversion into which each detail fits—even the reaping-hook of Jim's dream:

> One dream I dreamed a great many times, and it was always the same. I was in a harvest-field full of shocks, and I was lying against one of them. Lena Lingard came across the stubble barefoot, in a short skirt, with a curved reaping-hook in her hand, and she was straighten flushed like the dawn, with a kind of luminous rosiness all about her. She sat down beside me, turned to me with a soft sigh and said, "Now they are all gone, and I can kiss you as much as I like." (p. 147)

In Jim's dream of Lena, desire and fear clearly contend with one another. With the dreamer's infallibility, Jim contains his ambivalence in a surreal image of Aurora and the Grim Reaper as one. This collaged figure of Lena advances against an ordinary but ominous landscape. Background and forefigure first contrast and then coalesce in meaning. Lena's voluptuous aspects—her luminous glow of sexual arousal, her flesh bared by a short skirt, her soft sighs and kisses—are displayed against shocks and stubbles, a barren field when the reaping-hook has done its work. This landscape of harvest and desolation is not unfamiliar; nor is the apparitional woman who moves across it, sighing and making soft moan; nor the supine young man whom she kisses and transports. It is the archetypal landscape of ballad, myth, and drama, setting for *la belle dame sans merci* who enchants and satisfies, but then lulls and destroys. She comes, as Lena does, when the male is alone and unguarded. "Now they are all gone," Lena whispers, meaning Ántonia, his threshold guardian.

Keeping parental watch, Ántonia limits Jim's boundaries ("You know you ain't right to kiss me like that") and attempts to bar him from the dark unexplored country beyond boyhood with threats ("If I see you hanging around with Lena much, I'll go tell your grandmother"). Jim has the insight to reply, "You'll always treat me like a kid"; but his dream of past childhood games with Antonia suggests that the prospect of perpetual play attracts him, offering release from anxiety. Already in search of safety, he looks to childhood, for adolescence confronts him with the possibility of danger in women. Characteristically, his statement that he will prove himself unafraid belies the drift of his unconscious feelings. His dream of Lena and the reaping-hook depicts his ambivalence toward the cycle of growth, maturation, and death. The wheat ripens to be cut; maturity invites death.

Though Jim has declared his dream "always the same," it changes significantly. When it recurs in Lincoln, where he goes as a university student, it has been censored and condensed, and transmuted from reverie to remembrance:

> As I sat down to my book at last, my old dream about Lena coming across the harvest-field in her short skirt seemed to me like the memory of an actual experience. It floated before me on the page like a picture, and underneath it stood the mournful line: *"Optima dies...prima fugit."* (p. 175)

Now his memory can deal with fantasy as with experience: convert it to an image, frame it, and restore it to him retouched and redeemed. Revised, the dream loses its frightening details. Memory retains the harvest-field but represses the shocks and stubbles; keeps Lena in her short skirt, but replaces the sexual ambience of the vision. Originally inspired by the insinuative "hired girls," the dream recurs under the tranquilizing spell of Gaston Cleric, Jim's poetry teacher. As his name implies, Cleric's function is to guide Jim to renunciation of Lena, to offer instead the example of desire sublimated to art. Voluptuous excitement yields to a pensive mood, and poetry rather than passion engages Jim: "It came over me, as it had never done before, the relation between girls like those [Lena and "the hired girls"] and the poetry of Virgil. If there were no girls like them in the world, there would be no poetry" (p. 175).

In his study, among his books, Lena's image floats before him on a page of the GEORGICS, transferred from a landscape of death to Virgil's bucolic countryside; and it arouses not sensual desire but a safer and more characteristic mood: nostalgia—"melancholy reflection" upon the past. The reaping-hook is forgotten. Lena changes from the rosy goddess of dawn to an apparition of evening, of the dimly lit study and the darkened theater, where she glows with "lamplight" rather than sexual luminosity.

This preliminary sublimation makes it possible for Jim to have an affair with Lena. It is brief and peculiar, somehow appropriating from the theaters they frequent an unreal quality, the aspect of play. In contrast to the tragic stage-lovers who feel exquisitely, intone passionately, and love enduringly, they seem mere unengaged children, thrilled by make-believe people more than each other. "It all wrung my heart"; "there wasn't a nerve left in my body that hadn't been twisted"—Jim's histrionic (and rather feminine) outbursts pertain not to Lena but to *Marguerite Gauthier* as impersonated by "an infirm old actress." Camille's "dazzling loveliness," her gaiety and glitter—though illusory—impassion him far more than the real woman's sensuality. With Lena, he creates a mock-drama, casting himself in the stock role of callow lover pitted against Lena's older suitors.

In this innocuous triangle, he "drifts" and "plays"—and play, like struggle, emerges as his memoirs' motif. Far from being random, his play is directed toward the avoidance of future responsibilities. He tests the role of lover in the security of a make-believe world where his mistress is gentle and undemanding, his adversaries ineffectual, and his guardian spirit, Cleric, supportive. Cleric wants him to stop "playing with this handsome Norwegian," and so he does, leaving Lena forever and without regret. Though the separation of the stage-lovers Armand and Camille wracks them—"Lena wept unceasingly"—their own parting is vapid. Jim leaves to follow Cleric to Boston, there to study, and pursue a career. His period of enchantment has not proved one of permanent thrall and does not leave him, like Keats's knight, haggard and woebegone.

Nevertheless, the interim in Lincoln has serious consequences, for Jim's trial run into manhood remains abortive. He has not been able to bypass his circular "road of Destiny," that "predetermined" route which carries him back finally to Ántonia and childhood. With Lena, Jim seems divertible, at a crossroad. His alternatives are defined in two symbolic titles symbolically apposed: "Lena Lingard" and "Cuzak's Boys." Lena, the archetypal Woman, beckons him to full sexuality. Ántonia, the eternal Mother, lures him back through her children, Cuzak's boys, to perennial childhood.

If Jim cannot avoid his destiny, neither can he escape the "tyrannical" social code of his small town, Black Hawk, which permits its young men to play with "hired girls" but not to marry them. The pusillanimous "clerks and bookkeepers" of Black Hawk dance with the country girls, follow them forlornly, kiss them behind bushes—and run. "Respect for respectability" shunts them into loveless marriages with women of money or "refinement" who are sexless and safe. "Physically a race apart," the country girls are charged with sensuality, some of them considered "dangerous as high explosives." Through an empty conformist marriage, Jim avoids danger. He takes a woman who is independent and masculine, like Ántonia, who cannot threaten him as Lena does by her sheer femininity. Though Lena may be "the most beautiful, the most *innocently* sensuous of all the women in Willa Cather's works,"[9] Jim is locked into his fantasy of the reaping-hook.

Jim's glorification of Lena as the timeless muse of poetry and the unattainable heroine of romance requires a closer look. For while he seems to exalt her, typically, he works at cross-purposes to demean her—in his own involuted way. He sets her etherealized image afloat on pages of poetry that deal with the breeding of cattle (his memoirs quote only the last line here):

> So, while the herd rejoices in its youth
> Release the males and breed the cattle early,
> Supply one generation from another.
> For mortal kind, the best day passes first.
>
> (GEORGICS, Book III)

As usual, Jim remembers selectively—only the last phrase, the novel's epigraph—while he deletes what must have seemed devastating counsel: "Release the males." Moreover, the GEORGICS has only factitious relevance to Lena (though I might point out that it undoubtedly inspired Cather by suggesting the use of regional material and the seasonal patterning of Book I of MY ÁNTONIA). If anything, the allusion is downright inappropriate, for Virgil's poem extols pastoral life, but Lena, tired of drudgery, wants to get away from the farm. Interested in fashion and sensuous pleasure, settling finally in San Francisco, she is not really the muse for Virgil.

Jim's allusion does have a subtle value: by relegating Lena to the ideal but unreachable world of art, it assures their separation. Mismatched lovers because of social class, they remain irreconcilable as dream and reality. A real person, Jim must stop drifting and study; he can leave the woman while possessing Lena the dream in remembered reverie. Though motivated by fear and expediency (as much as Sylvester Lovett, Lena's fearful suitor in Black Hawk), he romanticizes his actions, eluding the possibility of painful self-confrontation. He veils his escape by identifying secretly with the hero Armand

Duval, also a mismatched lover, blameless, whose fervid affair was doomed from the first.

But as a lover, Jim belongs as much to comedy as to melodrama. His affair fits perfectly within the conventions of the comedy of manners: the sitting-room, Lena's "stiff little parlour"; the serving of tea; the idle talk of clothes and fashion; the nuisance pet dog Prince; the minor crises when the fatuous elder lovers intrude—the triviality. Engaged with Lena in this playacting, Jim has much at stake—nothing less than his sexuality. Through the more serious drama of a first affair, he creates his existential self: an adult male who fears a sexual woman. Through his trivial small-town comedy of manners, he keeps from introspection. He is drifting but busy, too much preoccupied with dinner parties and theater dates to catch the meaning of his drift. His mock romance recalls the words he had used years earlier to describe a childhood "mock adventure": "the game was fixed." The odds are against his growing up, and the two mockepisodes fall together as *pseudo*-initiations which fail to make him a man.

Jim's mock adventure occurs years back as he and Ántonia explore a series of interconnected burrows in prairie-dog-town. Crouched with his back to Ántonia, he hears her unintelligible screams in a foreign tongue. He whirls to discover a huge rattler coiling and erecting to spring. "Of disgusting vitality," the snake induces fear and nausea: "His abominable muscularity, his loathsome, fluid motion, somehow made me sick" (p. 32). Jim strikes violently and with revulsion, recognizing even then an irrational hatred stronger than the impulse for protection. The episode—typically ignored or misunderstood—combines elements of myth and dream. As a dragon-slaying, it conforms to the monomyth of initiation. It has a characteristic "call to adventure" (Ántonia's impulsive suggestion); a magic weapon (Peter's spade); a descent into a land of unearthly creatures (prairie-dog-town); the perilous battle (killing the snake); the protective tutelary spirit (Ántonia); and the passage through the rites to manhood ("You now a big mans"). As a test of courage, Jim's ordeal seems authentic, and critical opinion declares it so: "Jim Burden discovers his own hidden courage and becomes a man in the snake-killing incident."[10] But even Jim realizes that his initiation, like his romance later, is specious, and his accolade unearned: "it was a mock adventure; the game...fixed...by chance, as...for many a dragon-slayer."

As Jim accepts Ántonia's praise, his tone becomes wry and ironic, communicating a unique awareness of the duplicity in which he is involved. Antonia's effect upon Jim seems to me here invidious because her admiration of his manhood helps undermine it. Pronouncing him a man, she keeps him a boy. False to her role as tutelary spirit, she betrays him from first to last. She leads him into danger, fails to warn him properly, and finally, by validating the contest, closes off the road to authentic initiation and maturity.

Jim's exploration "below the surface" of prairie-dog-town strikes me as a significant mimetic act, a burrowing into his unconscious. Who is he "below the surface"? In which direction do his buried impulses lead? He acts out his quest for self-knowledge symbolically: if he could dig deep enough he would find a way through this labyrinth and learn the course of its hidden channels—whether "they ran straight down, or were horizontal..whether they had underground connections." Projecting upon the physical scene his adolescent concern with self, he speaks an analytic and rational language—but the experience turns into nightmare. Archetypal symbol of "the ancient, eldest Evil," the snake forces him to confront deeply repressed images, to acknowledge for the only time the effect of "horrible unconscious memories."

The sexual connotations of the snake incident are implicit. Later in Black Hawk they become overt through another misadventure—Wick Cutter's attempted rape of Jim, whom he mistakes for Ántonia. This time the sexual attack is literal. Wick Cutter, an old lecher, returns in the middle of the night to assault Ántonia, but meanwhile, persuaded by Ántonia's suspicions, Jim has taken her place in bed. He becomes an innocent victim of Cutter's lust and fury at deception. Threatened by unleashed male sex—the ultimate threat—he fights with primoridal violence, though again sickened with disgust. Vile as the Cutter incident is—and it is also highly farcical—Jim's nausea seems an overreaction, intensified by his shrill rhetoric and unmodulated tone. Unlike the snake episode, this encounter offers no rewards. It simply reduces him to a "a battered object," his body pommeled, his face swollen. His only recognition will be the laughter of the lubricious "old men at the drugstore." Again Ántonia has lured him into danger and exposed him to assault. Again he is furious: "I felt that I never wanted to see her again. I hated her almost as much as I hated Cutter. She had let me in for all this disgustingness" (p. 162). Through Wick Cutter, the sexual urge seems depraved, and more damning, ludicrous. No male in the novel rescues sex from indignity or gives it even the interest of sheer malevolence (as, for example, Ivy Peters does in A LOST LADY).

Also unexempt from the dangers of sex, Ántonia is seduced, exploited, and left with an illegitimate child. When finally she marries, she takes not a lover but a friend. To his relief, Jim finds husband and wife "on terms of easy friendliness, touched with humour" (p. 231). Marriage as an extension of friendship is Cather's recurrent formula, defined clearly, if idiosyncratically, by Alexandra in O PIONEERS!: "I think when friends marry, they are safe." Turning words to action, Alexandra marries her childhood friend, as does Cecile in SHADOWS ON THE ROCK—an older man whose passion has been expended on another woman. At best, marriage was dubious value in Cather's fiction. It succeeds when it seems least like marriage, when it remains sexless, or when sex is only instrumental to procreation. Jim accepts Ántonia's marriage for its "special mission" to bring forth children.

Why doesn't he take on this mission? He celebrates the myth of creation but fails to participate. The question has been raised bluntly by critics (though left unanswered): "Why had not Jim and Ántonia loved and married?"[11] When Ántonia, abandoned by Donovan, needs Jim most, he passionately avers, "You really are a part of me": "I'd have liked to have you for a sweetheart, or a wife, or my mother or my sister—anything that a woman can be to a man" (p. 208). Thereupon he leaves—not to return for twenty years. His failure to seize the palpable moment seems to one critic responsible for the emotional vacuum of Jim's life: "At the very center of his relation with Ántonia there is an emptiness where the strongest emotion might have been expected to gather."[12] But love for a woman is not Jim's "strongest emotion," cannot mitigate fear, nostalgia, or even simple snobbery. Nothing in Jim's past prepares him for love or marriage, and he remains in effect a pseudobachelor (just as he is a pseudolover), free to design a future with Ántonia's family that excludes his wife. In his childhood, his models for manhood are simple regressive characters, all bachelors, or patently unhappy married men struggling, like Mr. Shimerda, Chris Lingard, and Ole the Swede, for and against their families.

Later in Black Hawk, the family men seem merely vapid, and prophetically suburban, pushing baby-carriages, sprinkling lawns, paying bills, and driving about on Sundays (p. 105). Mr. Harling, Ántonia's employer in Black Hawk, seems different; yet he only further confuses Jim's already confused sense of sexual roles, for he indulges his son while he treats his daughter as a man, his business partner. With Ántonia, his "hired girl," Mr. Harling is repressive, a kind of superego, objecting to her adolescent contacts with men—the dances at Vannis's tent, the evening walks, the kisses and scuffles on the back porch. "I want to have my fling, like the other girls," Ántonia argues, but Harling insists she quit the dances or his house. Ántonia leaves, goes to the notorious Cutter, and then to the seductive arms of Larry Donovan—with consequences that are highly instructive to Jim, that can only reinforce his inchoate fears. Either repression of sex or disaster: Jim sees these alternatives polarized in Black Hawk, and between them he cannot resolve his ambivalence. Though he would like Ántonia to become a woman, he wants her also to remain asexual.

By switching her sexual roles, Antonia only adds to his confusion. As "hired girl" in Black Hawk and later as Cuzak's wife, she cooks, bakes, sews, and rears children. Intermittently, she shows off her strength and endurance in the fields, competing with men. Even her name changes gender—no adventitious matter, I believe; it has its masculine variant, Tony, as Willa Cather has hers, Willie. Cather's prototype for Ántonia, Annie Pavelka, was a simple Bohemian girl; though their experiences are similar, Ántonia Shimerda is Cather's creation—an ultimately strange bisexual. She shares Cather's pride in masculinity and projects both her and Jim's ambivalent sexual attitudes. Cather recalled that "much of what I knew about Annie came from the talks I had with young men. She had a fascination for them."[13] In the novel, however, Lena fascinates men while Ántonia toils alongside them. "I can work like mans now," she announces when she is only fifteen. In the fields, says Jim, "she kept her sleeves rolled up all day, and her arms and throat were burned as brown as a sailor's. Her neck came up strongly out of her shoulders, like the bole of a tree out of the turf. One sees that draught-horse neck among the peasant women in all old countries" (p. 80). Sailor, tree, draught-horse, peasant—hardly seductive comparisons, hardly conducive to fascination.

Ántonia's illegitimate pregnancy brutalizes her even more than heavy farmwork. Her punishment for sexual involvemtnt—and for the breezy pleasures of courtship—is thoroughgoing masculinization. Wearing "a man's long overcoat and boots, and a man's felt hat," she does "the work of a man on the farm," plows, herds cattle. Years later, as Cuzak's wife, her "inner glow" must compensate for the loss of her youthful beauty, the loss, even, of her teeth. Jim describes her finally as "a stalwart, brown woman, flat-chested, her curly brown hair a little grizzled"—his every word denuding her of sensual appeal.

This is not to deny that at one time Jim found Ántonia physically desirable. He hints that in Black Hawk he had kissed her in a more than friendly way—and had been rebuffed. But he is hardly heartbroken at their impasse, for his real and enduring love for her is based not on desire but on nostalgia. Childhood memories bind him more profoundly than passion, especially memories of Mr. Shimerda. In their picnic reunion before Jim departs for Lincoln, Ántonia recounts her father's story of transgression, exile, and death. Her miniature tale devolves upon the essential theme of destructive sex. As a young man, her father succumbs to desire for the family's servant girl, makes her pregnant, marries her against his parents' wishes, and becomes thereby an outcast. His death on the distant prairie traces back to an initial sexual act which triggers inexorable consequences. It strips him of all he values: his happy irresponsible bachelor life with the trombone-player he "loves"; his family home in beautiful

Bohemia; his vocation as violinist when he takes to homesteading in Nebraska; and his joy in life itself.

For a while, a few desultory pleasures could rouse him from apathy and despair. But in the end, he finds the pattern of his adult life, as many Cather characters do, unbearable, and he longs for escape. Though Ántonia implies that her poppa's mistake was to marry, especially outside his social class (as Jim is too prudent to do), the marriage comes about through his initial sexual involvement. Once Mr. Shimerda acts upon sexual impulse, he is committed to a woman who alienates him from himself; and it is loss of self, rather than the surmountable hardships of pioneer life, which induces his despair. Suicide is his final capitulation to destructive forces he could have escaped only by first abnegating sex.

Though this interpretation may sound extreme—that the real danger to man is woman, that his protection lies in avoiding or eliminating her—it seems to me the essence of the most macabre and otherwise unaccountable episode in MY ÁNTONIA. I refer to that grisly acting out of male aversion, the flashback of Russian Pavel feeding the bride to the wolves. I cannot imagine a more graphic representation of underlying sentiments than we find here. Like most of the episodes in Jim's memoirs, this begins innocently, with the young bride drawing Peter, Pavel, and other guests to a nearby village for her wedding. But the happy evening culminates in horror; for the wolves are bad that year, starving, and when the guests head for home they find themselves rapidly pursued through a landscape of terror. Events take on the surreality of nightmare as black droves run like streaks of shadows after the panicking horses, as sledges overturn in the snow, and mauled and dying wedding guests shriek. Fast as Pavel drives his team, it cannot outrun the relentless "back ground-shadows," images of death. Pavel's murderous strategy to save himself and Peter is almost too inhuman to imagine: to allay the wolves and lighten his load, he wrests the bride from the struggling groom, and throws her, living bait, to the wolves. Only then does his sledge arrive in safety at his village.

The tale holds the paradigm for Mr. Shimerda's fate—driven from home because of a woman, struggling for survival against a brutal winter landscape, pursued by regret and despair to death. The great narrative distance at which this episode is kept from Jim seems to me to signify its explosiveness, the need to handle with care. It is told to Jim by Ántonia, who overhears Peter telling it to Mr. Shimerda. Though the vignette emerges from this distance—and through Jim's obscuring nostalgia—its gruesome meaning focuses the apparently disjunct parts of the novel, and I find it inconceivable that critics consider it "irrelevant."[14] The art of MY ÁNTONIA lies in the subtle and inevitable relevance of its details, even the most trivial, like the picture Jim chooses to decorate a Christmas book for Ántonia's little sister: "I took 'Napoleon Announcing the Divorce to Josephine' for my frontispiece" (p. 55). In one way or another, the woman must go.

To say that Jim Burden expresses castration fears would provide a facile conclusion: and indeed his memoirs multiply images of sharp instruments and painful cutting. The curved reaping-hook in Lena Lingard's hands centralizes an overall pattern that includes Peter's clasp-knife with which he cuts all his melons; Crazy Mary's corn-knife (she "made us feel how sharp her blade was, showing us very graphically just what she meant to do to Lena"); the suicidal tramp "cut to pieces" in the threshing machine; and wicked Wick Cutter's sexual assault. When Lena, the essence of sex, appears suddenly in Black Hawk, she seems to precipitate a series of violent recollections.

First Jim remembers Crazy Mary's pursuit of Lena with her sharpened cornknife. Then Ántonia recalls the story of the crazy tramp in details which seem to me unconsciously reverberating jim's dream. Like Jim, Ántonia is relaxed and leaning against a strawstack; similarly, she sees a figure approach "across the stubble"—significantly, his first words portend death. Offering to "cut bands," within minutes he throws himself into the threshing machine and is "cut to pieces." In his pockets the threshers find only "an old penknife" and the "wishbone of a chicken." Jim follows this anecdote with a vignette of Blind d'Arnault, a black musician who, as we shall see, represents emasculation; Jim tells how children used to tease the little blind boy and try "to get his chicken-bone away." Such details, I think, should not be considered fortuitous or irrelevant; and critics who have persisted in overlooking them should note that they are stubbornly there, and in patterned sequence.

I do not wish to make a case history of Jim Burden or a psychological document of MY ÁNTONIA, but to uncover an elusive underlying theme—one that informs the fragmentary parts of the novel and illuminates the obsession controlling Cather's art. For like most novelists, Cather writes out of an obsessive concern to which her art gives various and varied expression. In MY ÁNTONIA, her consummate work, that obsession has its most private as well as its most widely shared meanings. At the same time that the novel is highly autobiographical, it is representatively American in its material, mood, and unconscious uses of the past. In it, as in other novels, we can discover that Cather's obsession had to do with the assertion of self. This is the preoccupation of her protagonists who in their various ways seek to assert their identity, in defiance, if necessary, of others, of convention, of nature, of life itself.

Biographers imply that Cather's life represented a consistent pursuit of autonomy, essential, she believed, to her survival as an artist. Undoubtedly, she was right; had she given herself to marriage and children, assuming she could, she might have sacrificed her chance to write. Clearly, she identified writing with masculinity, though which of the two constituted her fundamental drive is a matter of psychological dynamics we can never really decide. Like Ántonia, she displayed strong masculine traits, though she loved also feminine frilleries and the art of cuisine. All accounts of her refer to her "masculine personality"—her mannish dress, her deep voice, her energetic stride; and even as a child she affected boyish clothes and cropped hair. Too numerous to document, such references are a running motif throughout the accounts of Mildred Bennett, Elizabeth Sergeant, and E. K. Brown. Their significance is complex and perhaps inescapable, but whatever else they mean, they surely demonstrate Cather's self-assertion: she would create her own role in life, and if being a woman meant sacrificing her art, then she would lead a private and inviolate life in defiance of convention.

Her image of inviolability was the child. She sought quaintly, perhaps foolishly, to refract this image through her person when she wore a schoolgirl costume. The Steichen photograph of her in middy blouse is a familiar frontispiece to volumes of her work; and she has been described as characteristically "at the typewriter, dressed in a childlike costume, a middy blouse with navy bands and tie and a duck skirt."[15] In life, she tried to hold on to childhood through dress; in art, through a recurrent cycle of childhood, maturity, and childhood again: the return effected usually through memory. Sometimes the regressive pattern signalized a longing for death, as in THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE and DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP; always it revealed a quest for reunion with an orginal authentic self. In MY ÁNTONIA, the prologue introduces Ántonia and the motif of childhood simultaneously, for her name is linked with *"the country, the conditions, the whole adventure of...childhood."*

The memoirs proper open with the children's journey into pristine country where men are childlike or project into life characters of the child's imagination: like Jake who "might have stepped out of the pages of 'Jesse James.' The years of maturity comprise merely an interim period—and in fact, are hardly dealt with. For Jim, as for Cather, the real meaning of time is cyclical, its purpose to effect a return to the beginning. Once Jim finds again "the first road" he traveled as a wondering child, his story ends. Hardly discernible, this road returns him to Ántonia, and through her, to his real goal, the enduring though elusive image of his original self which Cather represents by his childhood shadow. Walking to Ántonia's house with her boys—feeling himself almost a boy again—Jim merges with his shadow, the visible elongation of self. At last, his narcissistic dream comes to fulfillment: "It seemed, after all, so natural to be walking along a barbed-wire fence beside the sunset, toward a red pond, and to see my shadow moving along at my right, over the close-cropped grass" (p. 224). Just as the magnified shadow of plow against sky—a blazing key image—projects his romantic notion of the West, so "two long shadows [that] flitted before or followed after" symbolized his ideal of perennial children running through, imaged against, and made one with the prairie grass.

Jim's return "home" has him planning a future with Cuzak's boys that will recapitulate the past: once more he will sleep in haylofts, hunt "up the Niobrara," and travel the "Bad Lands."[14] Play reenters as his serious concern, not the sexual play of imminent manhood, but regressive child's play. In a remarkable statement, Jim says: "There were enough Cuzaks to play with for a long while yet. Even after the boys grew up, there would always be Cuzak himself!" (p. 239). A current article on MY ÁNTONIA misreads this conclusion: "though Jim feels like a boy again...He does not wish that he were a boy again....He has no more need to cling to the past, for the past has been transfigured like the autumn prairie of old."[16]

Such reasoning falls in naively with Jim's self-deception, that the transformation of the land to country somehow validates his personal life. Jim's need to reenter childhood never relents, becomes even more urgent as he feels adult life vacuous. The years have not enriched him, except with a wealth of memories—"images in the mind that did not fade—that grew stronger with time." Most precious in his treasury of remembered images is that of a boy of ten crossing the prairie under "the complete dome of heaven" and finding sublimity in the union of self with earth and sky. An unforgettable consummation, never matched by physical union, he seeks to recreate it through memory. Jim's ineffable desire for a child more alive to him than his immediate being vibrates to a pathetic sense of loss. I believe that we may find this irretrievable boy in a photograph of young *Willie Cather*, another child who took life from from imagination and desire.[17]

In a later novel, THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE,[18] Cather rationalizes her cathexis on childhood through the protagonist's musings, at which we might glance briefly. Toward the end of his life, Professor Godfrey St. Peter discovers he has two identities: that of his "original" self, the child; and of his "secondary" self, the man in love. To fulfill himself, "the lover" creates a meretricious "design" of marriage, children, and career, now, after thirty years, suddenly meaningless. The Professor's cyclic return to his real and original self begins with solitary retrospection. All he wants is to "be alone"—to repossess himself. For, having yielded through love to another, he has lost "the person he was in the beginning." Now before he dies, he longs for his original image as a child, an image that returns to him in moments of "vivid consciousness" or of remembrance. Looking back, the Professor sees the only escape from a false secondary life to be through premature death: death of the sexual man before he realizes his sexuality and becomes involved in the relationships it demands. This is the happy fate of his student Tom Outland, who dies young, remaining inviolate, pure, and most important, self-possessed: "He seemed to know...he was solitary and must always be so; he had never married, never been a father. He was earth, and would return to earth" (p. 263).

This Romantic mystique of childhood illuminates the fear of sex in Cather's world. Sex unites one with another. Its ultimate threat is loss of self. In Cather's construct, naively and of course falsely, the child is asexual, his love inverted, his identity thus intact. Only Ántonia manages to grow older and retain her original integrity. Like Tom Outland, her affinity is for the earth. She "belongs" to the farm, is one with the trees, the flowers, the rye and wheat she plants. Though she marries, Cuzak is only "the instrument of Ántonia's special mission." Through him she finds a self-fulfillment that excludes him. Through her, Jim hopes to be restored to himself.

The supreme value Jim and other Cather characters attribute to "old friendships" reflects a concern with self. Old friends know the child immanent in the man. Only they can have communion without causing self-estrangement, can marry "safely." They share "the precious, the incommunicable past"—as Jim says in his famous final words. But to keep the past so precious, they must romanticize it; and to validate childhood, they must let memory filter its experiences through the screen of nostalgia. Critics have wondered whether Jim Burden is finally the most suitable narrator for MY ÁNTONIA. I submit that Cather's choice is utterly strategic. For Jim, better than any other character, could control his memories, since only he knows of but does not experience the suffering and violence inherent in his story. And ultimately, he is not dealing with a story as such, but with residual "images in the mind." MY ÁNTONIA is a magnificent and warped testimony to the mind's image-making power, an implicit commentary on how that creative power serves the mind's need to ignore and deny whatever is reprehensible in whatever one loves. Cather's friend and biographer said of her, "There was so much she did not want to see and saw not."[19] We must say the same of Jim Burden, who held painful and violent aspects of early American life at safe distance, where finally he could not see them.

Jim's vignette of Blind d'Arnault, the black piano player who entertains at Black Hawk, is paradigmatic of his way of viewing the past. Its factual scaffolding (whether Cather's prototype was Blind Boone, Blind Tom, or a "composite of Negro musicians") seems to me less important than its tone. I find the vignette a work of unconscious irony as Jim paints d'Arnault's portrait but meanwhile delineates himself. The motif of blindness compounds the irony. D'Arnault's is physical, as though it is merely futile for him to see a world he cannot enter. Jim's is moral: an unawareness of his stereotyped, condescending, and ultimately invidious vision. Here, in his description of the black man, son of a slave, Jim's emblematic significance emerges as shamefully he speaks for himself, for Cather, and for most of us:

> [His voice] was the soft, amiable Negro voice, like those I remembered from early childhood, with the note of docile subservience in it. He had the Negro head, too; almost no head at all,

> nothing behind the ears but the folds of neck under close-cropped wool. He would have been repulsive if his face had not been so kindly and happy. It was the happiest face I had seen since I left Virginia. (p. 122)

Soft, amiable, docile, subservient, kindly, happy—Jim's image, as usual, projects his wish-fulfillment; his diction suggests an unconscious assuagement of anxiety, also. His phrase of astounding insult and innocence—"almost no head at all"—assures him that the black man should not frighten, being an imcomplete creature, possessed, as we would like to believe, of instinct and rhythm, but deprived of intellect. Jim's final hyperbole registers his fear of this alien black face saved from repulsiveness only by a toothy servile smile (it might someday lose). To attenuate his portrait of d'Arnault, Jim introduced innuendoes of sexual incompetence. He recognizes d'Arnault's sensuality but impugns it by his image of sublimation: "all the agreeable sensations possible to creatures of flesh and blood were heaped up on those black-and-white keys, and he [was] gloating over them and trickling them through his yellow fingers" (p. 126). Jim's genteel opening phrase connotes male sexuality, which he must sublimate, displace from the man to the music, reduce to a trickle. D'Arnault "looks like some glistening African god of pleasure, full of strong, savage blood"; but super-imposed is our familiar Uncle Tom "all grinning," "bowing to everyone, docile and happy."

Similarly, consider Jim's entrancing image of the four Danish girls who stand all day in the laundry ironing the townspeople's clothes. How charming they are: flushed and happy; how fatherly the laundryman offering water—no swollen ankles; no boredom or rancor; no exploitation: a cameo image from "the beautiful past." Peter and Pavel, dreadful to any ordinary mind for their murderous deed, ostracized by everyone, now disease-ridden and mindless, are to Jim picturesque outcasts: Pavel spitting blood; Peter spitting seeds as he desperately eats all his melons after kissing his cow goodbye, the only creature for him to love. And Mr. Shimerda's suicide. Jim reconciles himself to the horror of the mutilated body frozen in its own blood by imagining the spirit released and homeward bound to its beloved Bohemia. Only the evocative beauty of Cather's language—and the inevitable validation as childhood memory—can romanticize this sordid death and the squalor in which it takes place.

Violence is as much the essence of prairie life as the growth of the wheat and blossoming of the corn. Violence appears suddenly and inexplicably, like the suicidal tramp. But Jim gives violence a cameo quality. He has the insistent need—and the strategy—to turn away from the very material he presents. He can forget the reaping-hook and reshape his dream. And as the novel reveals him doing this, it reveals our common usage of the past as a romance and refuge from the present. MY ÁNTONIA engraves a view of the past which is at best partial; at worst, blind. But our present is continuous with the whole past, as it was, despite Jim Burden's attempt to deny this, and despite Cather's "sad little refrain": "Our present is ruined—but we had a beautiful past."[20] Beautiful to one who recreated it so; who desperately needed it so; who would deny the violence and the destructive attitudes toward race and sex immortalized in his very denial.

We, however, have as desperate a need for clarity of vision as Jim had for nostalgia; and we must begin to look at MY ÁNTONIA, long considered a representatively American novel, not only for its beauty of art and for its affirmation of history, but also, and instructively, for its negations and evasions.

Much as we would like to ignore them, for they bring painful confrontations, we must see what they would show us about ourselves—how we betray our past when we forget its most disquieting realities; how we begin to redeem it when we remember.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THIRTEEN

[1] Terence Martin, "The Drama of Memory in MY ANTONIA," PMLA LXXXIV (March, 1969), pp. 304-11.

[2] John H. Randall, III, THE LANDSCAPE AND THE LOOKING GLASS: WILLA CATHER'S SEARCH FOR VALUE (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960), p. 149. Cather's remark, "the best thing I've ever done is MY ANTONIA. I feel I've made a contribulation to American letters with that book," in Mildred Bennett, THE WORLD OF WILLA CATHER (1951; reprinted, Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 203.

[3] Bennett, p. 212. Cather is quoted as saying, "If you gave me a thousand dollars for every structural fault in MY ANTONIA you'd make me very rich."

[4] David Daiches, WILLA CATHER: A CRITICAL INTERPRETATION (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1951), pp. 43-61.

[5] Willa Cather, O PIONEERS! (1913: reprinted Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1941), p. 259. When Emil finally approaches Marie to make love, she seems asleep, then whispers, "I was dreaming this...don't take my dream away!" The mergence of the real lover into the dream reminds me here of Keats's THE EVE OF ST. AGNES—"Inot her dream he melted." Here, too, the realization of love means facing the cold wintery world from which Madeline has been protected by her castle and her fantasy.

[6] Willa Cather, MY ANTONIA (1918; reprented, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1946), p. 2. All italics in quotations from MY ANTONIA are in the orginal, and all subsequent references are to this text. I use this edition not only because it is readily available but also because the introduction by Walter Havighurst and the suggestions for reading and discussion by Bertha Handlan represent clearly the way the novel has.

[7] James E. Miller, "MY ANTONIA: A Frontier Drama of Time," AMERICAN QUARTERLY, X (Winter, 1958), p. 481.

[8] See Bennett, p. 148. Cather is quoted as saying, "The world broke in two about 1920, and I belonged to the former half." The year 1922, is given in her preface (later deleted) to NOT UNDER FORTY (renamed LITERARY ENCOUNTERS, 1937).

[9] E.K. Brown and Leon Edel, WILLA CATHER: A CRITICAL BIOGRAPHY (New York: knopf, 1953), p. 203. Emphasis added.

[10] Miller, p. 482.

[11] Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant, WILLA CATHER: A MEMOIR (1953; repreinted, Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 151.

[12] Brown and Edel, p. 202.

[13] Bennett, p. 47.

[14] Daiches says, "It is a remarkable little inset story, but its relation to the novel as a whole is somewhat uncertain" (p. 46). However, Daiches finds so many episodes and details "uncertain," "dubious," "not wholly dominated," or "not fully integreated," it might be his reading is "flawed" rather than the novel.

[15] Sergeant, p. 117.

[16] Martin, p. 311.

17See the "pictures from the Wm. Cather, M.D., period of Willa's Life" in Bennett, especially the photograph of Cather as a child with "her first short haircut." Note Cather's vacillating taste in clothes from the clearly masculine to feminine.

It is significant that in various plays at school and at the university, Cather assumed male roles—so convincingly that spectators sometimes refused to believe the actor was not a boy. See Bennett, pp. 175-6, 179.

18Willa Cather, THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE (1925; reprinted, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1938).

19Sergeant, p. 46.

20Ibid., p. 121.

out here on Rural Route 1
there isn't really much around
just woods and pastures
and a road that needs to be regravelled
the dairy trucks go by early
and the postman at ten thirty
and no one else
until he comes home about four
then we go out and watch some myrtle warblers
or whatever happens to be around.
what do i do out here all day?
it's hard for me to remember
sometimes.
"What do you do out here all day?" she said, "I mean,
I have the baby to keep me busy."
"Well," I said, "I read a lot and write
and brood a lot, I quess."
I was smiling
but she was waiting with serious eyes
filled with schedules
clicking like knitting needles
8:00 feed the baby
8:30 feed the husband
9:00 read TIME magazine
9:30 baby needs something
10:00 grocery shopping
11:30 baby
12:00 knitting and crocheting
12:30 feed the baby
2:30 faculty wife reading meeting
4:00 pick up baby from Mrs. Hogan's
5:00 baby again
5:30 get T.V. guide recipe for coq au vin
on the table, etc. you get the idea.
i tried to think of what i had done yesterday
so i could give her something tangible
to sink her knitting needles into
but i couldn't remember.
"I'd go crazy out here all day all alone," she said.
"Well, there's really not a hell of a lot to do, I guess."
then it all came back to me
how i spent the whole day
thinking about myrtle warblers
and never really getting it down
into a poem
but i have my schedules too
i won't spend more than a day or so
with thewarblers.
sometime this week i'm going to begin some serious work
with loons and swans.

—Susan Shaw, MOVING OUT, Vol. 2, no. 2 (1972), p. 5.